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Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk August 16, 2015

East edition No 673

CRIME

Coppers counting their coffers

Fears for future of policing grow

HEALTH

Radical change for health services

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What to do now the results are through?

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Kent on Sunday

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Bad grades don't need to be the end of the world

THIS week marked a huge moment in the lives of thousands of young people across the county.

The dreaded A-level results day.

Following months of hard work, the day is always met with a certain amount of trepidation. Many of us will remember the nerves that go alongside picking up results and the fear that things haven't gone to plan.

For some students, the results they saw on the piece of paper they were handed on Thursday were what they hoped for, they are off to their university of choice and excited for the future. But for others, this sadly might not be the case due to not getting the grades they needed.

For the young people who have put a huge amount of pressure on themselves to achieve certain marks, this disappointment can feel absolutely crushing.

But despite things not going quite to plan, it is so important not to beat yourself up too much, but to keep calm and reassess your future plans.

While it might feel like this is the

end of the world, it isn't. It is so important to remember that, while they are important, exams are not the be-all and end-all and there are so many other routes you can take to a successful and fulfilling career.

It is also important to take a step back and put this all into perspective.

Because this week also marks the anniversary of an intense day of fighting during the Second World War that has come to be known as the Hardest Day. On August 18, 1940, the brave group of RAF Airmen known as The Few took to the skies and battled the German Luftwaffe - with both sides losing more aircraft than any other day during the Battle of Britain.

Some of those who fought were just teenagers, giving up any hope of a carefree youth to protect and serve their countries. Their sacrifice is remembered, and their fight should help us to realise that, even when things don't go how we hoped, we are fortunate enough to be able to enjoy our freedom.

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Rochester raid nets haul of automatic weapons

Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

A HAUL of more than 30 automatic weapons were seized during an armed raid near Rochester.

It was conducted by the National Crime Agency (NCA) and Kent Police.

Officers from the NCA's Armed Operations Unit (AOU) working alongside Kent Police Tactical Firearms Command, found weapons designed and built to be used in warzones.

A total of 22 automatic assault rifles, nine Skorpion machine pistols, 58 magazines, two silencers and around 1,000 live rounds of ammunition were discovered during the operation on Tuesday afternoon.

The weapons were found in suitcases and holdall bags after police stopped a van as it left Cuxton Marina.

The search followed the arrival of a motorcruiser which had travelled to the UK from France.

The boat was tracked on its journey across the English Channel in an operation which involved Border Force, the NCA and the National Maritime



DEADLY: Officers found the lethal haul at a marina near Rochester

Information Centre working in partnership.

Deputy director Graham Gardner from the NCA said that the raid would go some way to combatting crime.

He said: "This was an extremely significant seizure, the largest of its kind in the UK."

"I've no doubt that these weapons would have ended up in criminal hands and it goes without saying the risk they would have

posed to the public.

"We are still in the early stages of a significant investigation which will continue for some time."

"Through the excellent work and action taken alongside Kent Police we have made a huge step in protecting the public in Kent and further afield."

Eight people – seven men and a woman, all aged between 24 and 58 – were arrested after the raid.

Seven of those arrested have now been charged with the suspected importation of firearms.

Four of those charged come from the Rochester area.

The group have been remanded in custody, and appeared via video link at Medway Magistrates Court on Friday August 14.

A 28-year-old man from Swanley has been released on bail pending further enquiries until September 24.

European crackdown on speeding drivers aims to show dangers

DRIVERS travelling through Europe this week are being warned to watch their speed – or face tough consequences.

Officers from the European Traffic Police Network – known as Tispol – will be cracking down on speeders, and all other motorists who are committing offences across the European road network.

The operation starts on Monday (August 17), and will see traffic officers across Europe using a variety of speed detection methods to catch rogue drivers.

Tispol says that the aim of the operation is to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding, highlighting the benefit for all road users – not just those in cars – of driving at legal, and appropriate speeds on different roads – particularly important for motorists who driving on unfamiliar roads, or in foreign countries.

"We urge all drivers to challenge their own attitude to speeding," said Tispol president Aidan Reid.

He continued: "Anyone who still believes that speeding is a trivial offence needs to think again."

"That's because excessive, or inappropriate speed, has a singularly devastating impact on the safety of road users, increasing both the risk of a crash and the severity of the consequences."

"It is estimated that speeding contributes to as many as one third of all crashes resulting in death, and is the most important contributory factor to road deaths and serious injuries."

"All across Europe this week, police officers will be ensuring that drivers respect the different speed limits."

"In cases where drivers choose to ignore these limits, officers will take appropriate steps to enforce the law."

In August last year, a similar Tispol operation took place. The organisation said that it saw a total of more than 580,000 detections in 28 countries across Europe.

Freight moves away from Kent after Operation Stack

TRAFFIC chaos caused by Operation Stack and trouble at the Channel Tunnel have led lorry drivers to find alternative ports according to one of Britain's biggest ferry operators.

P&O Ferries says that the constant disruption to freight crossing the English Channel at Folkestone and Dover has resulted in drivers looking elsewhere. The

ferry operator says the numbers using its service from Teesport to Zeebrugge rose by 172 per cent as drivers sought to dodge queues for Operation Stack.

Janette Bell, P&O's commercial director, said: "Importers and exporters who previously crossed via the Channel Tunnel are starting to look at longer routes as a more reliable alternative."

County council under fire after serious data breaches

DATA security at Kent County Council has come under scrutiny, after privacy advocates Big Brother Watch revealed there had been five breaches of privacy by the authority in a three year period beginning in April 2011.

The most serious breach involved an employee who leaked the details of a disciplinary case.

In that instance, the offender

ended up leaving their job.

Another concerning case involved an employee at KCC viewing confidential files for their own personal use.

That case, and the other three instances of data breaches, only led to the employees receiving warnings from the county council.

KCC has been asked for comment on the breaches.



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Kent students discover their A-level results

THOUSANDS of young people across the county found out their A-level results on Thursday.

With some needing certain grades to get into the universities of their choice, nerves were running high.

Many were pleased with their results, with a large number of students receiving A* to C grades.

Conservative MP for Gillingham and Rainham,

Rehman Chisti, congratulated students in his constituency, saying: "It is great to see so many young people doing so well, showing that their hard work and commitment has paid off. This is also thanks to the work of the fantastic teachers, who through their support and assistance, have enabled students to reach their potential."



VILE: He committed depraved crimes

Historic sex abuse sees pervert caged

A MAN who systematically abused a young boy in Rusthall during the 1970s has been jailed for eight years.

Kevin Blunden, 57, started the abuse when his victim was aged just nine-years-old.

The vulnerable child had 'run away from home' when he was found by Blunden, who told him his parents would not punish him if he let him smack him instead.

He struck the child with a belt and then sexually abused him.

Blunden lived close to the victim and after grooming him went on to commit further crimes over a two year period between 1975 and 1977.

He sometimes abused his victim as often as twice a week.

His victim came forward last year telling police that he had recently seen his abuser.

Blunden was subsequently arrested at his home address in Hunters Way, Tunbridge Wells and charged with historic sexual abuse offences.

He was sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court on August 7 after a jury convicted him of five counts of gross indecency with a child.

He has been jailed for eight years and will spend the rest of his life on the sex offenders' register.

Manston Airport CPO takes a step closer after £2 million cash deposit

Molly Kersey

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THANET District Council's final request to American firm RiverOak for important financial evidence, to put towards the cost of a compulsory purchase order of the Manston Airport site, has been answered.

RiverOak, which has previously stated it would pay all the costs of a compulsory purchase order for the airport, took to Twitter to confirm that \$2m had been deposited.

The Supporters of Manston Airport group, who have been campaigning for the airfield to reopen, issued a statement saying: "We can now confirm that RiverOak have deposited \$2 million into their solicitor's client's account.

"This will be topped up to £2 million and moved into an escrow account as soon as the indemnity agreement is signed.

"This initial tranche of money will be available to draw on during the expected and imminent decision to



HOPE: A CPO could happen

compulsory purchase Manston Airport, with RiverOak being identified as the indemnity partner.

"These funds are accompanied by the reiterated reassurance, given by one of the country's leading legal

teams James Maurici QC of London's Landmark Chambers, that there will be no personal financial or legal risk to either councillors or officers.

"The UKIP Thanet District Council, led by Councillor Chris Wells, was elected three months ago on their pledge to compulsory purchase Manston Airport as their top priority. The chief executive, Madeline Homer, is employed to ensure that the elected council's strategic objectives are delivered in the public interest with taxpayer's money safeguarded at all times.

"The Supporters of Manston Airport are of the opinion that RiverOak have now provided all the reassurances, information and funds necessary at this stage and see no reason why the CPO cannot now be expedited at the earliest opportunity."

In a statement council leader Chris Wells said: "We have to be absolutely certain that the financial evidence is in place. I look forward to receiving the information as promised to provide the assurances we need in order to progress."

Thunderstorms lash Kent causing chaos

KENT got drenched on Thursday, with thunderstorms rolling through the county causing chaos for many.

Flash flooding led to travel trouble for motorists as rain lashed the south east, with serious flooding on the Romney Marsh, in Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells.

And it wasn't much better for home owners, with seven properties in the High Street, New Romney, waterlogged after torrential downpours.

The Met Office placed the county on Amber Alert status on Wednesday to warn of the storms.

The Environment Agency also placed 'flood warnings' on parts of Romney Marsh, and the Upper Stour River, near Ashford.

Lightning also caused problems for the county's residents, with Kent Fire and Rescue Service stating that they had been called to two properties in Ashford which had been hit by strikes during the savage thunderstorms. There were no reported injuries following the storms.

Legionnaires disease payout for pensioner

AN 84-year-old man from Tunbridge Wells who contracted Legionnaires' disease – a form of pneumonia contracted by inhaling water droplets with bacteria – while on a cruise in November 2011 has received a five-figure payout from the operator.

Frank Standen fell ill just days in to the trip of a lifetime between Southampton and Cape Verde.

When Mr Standen began suffering the symptoms, he was treated on the ship. However, as his condition deteriorated, he was airlifted to hospital in Gran Canaria until he was well enough to be moved to Sevenoaks Hospital.

The cruise operator – Fred Olsen – said that there was no evidence he had contracted the disease on board the ship, refusing to admit liability but saying it was 'very sorry Mr Standen was seriously unwell'.

Mr Standen said he was delighted to have received the settlement.

He said: "I feel really lucky to be alive but the whole experience was dreadful and really shook me up."

Canterbury told to add homes to plan

CANTERBURY City Council needs to go back to the drawing board according to a Government inspector who is examining its local plan.

But despite the hopes of campaigners, the order hasn't come through for the council to lower its housing target.

Instead, the inspector says the council should be looking to build more homes for people in the area, and should raise its building target by 800 new homes over the plan period.

The city council had already proposed a target that many campaigners had branded excessive, and unsustainable.

The inspector told the council that it should build more in a letter, sent after the first stage of the examination process had ended.

He also criticised the lack of a five-year land supply, which the council needs to show it can maintain development over the course of the next five years.

The inspector said that more sites needed to be examined.

University team helping keep our endangered animals safer

Jamie Weir

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PROFITING from the killing of rare or endangered animals could soon be made more difficult, after a team from the University of Kent pioneered a computer system that will help curb sales of illegal hunting trophies online.

Currently, identifying illegal items – such as elephant ivory – for sale on the internet is a long, difficult and expensive task for law enforcement agencies.

Searches for terms such as 'ivory' throw up a variety of different responses. Criminals looking to profit from the trade in illegal items also usually avoid the term in order to avoid online bans.

It makes the task of hunting down these types of illegal products as difficult as finding a needle in a haystack.

The team from the University of Kent – led by Dr David Roberts, senior lecturer in Biodiversity Conservation – have created a data mining system that can help track down these products when they are listed online.

The University's Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology developed the new programme in conjunction with its School of Computing.

The automated system is able to track



MONEY: Elephants are often hunted for their valuable ivory

down items by mimicking the human expert classification of potentially illegal elephant ivory but at a fraction of the cost and thousands of times faster.

Dr Roberts has researched the effectiveness of the new system, showing how the team has used a special formula to read computer information behind eBay listings.

During the research into the new automated tool's effectiveness, several human experts manually classified items which had been listed as antiques on eBay. They exam-

ined the listings, looking at the type of ivory, and whether or not it was likely to be legal.

The human classifications were then compared with the automated system. It was found that the new automated system could replicate the success of the human experts with a 93 per cent accuracy rate, and that this would be increased if it added more information, such as images.

The university's team is now working toward launching the system.

Food and Drink Awards shortlist

THE shortlist for the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food and Drink Awards at the Ashford International Hotel on October 15 have been revealed.

These are the finalists in each category:

- **Farmers' Market:** Penshurst, Tonbridge and Knockholt.
- **Farm Shop:** MB Farms, Stockbury; Fullers Farm Shop, Eridge, and Kelseys Farm Shop, Sidcup.
- **Newcomer, sponsored by Clive Emson Land Property Auctioneers:** Cookery Studio Kent, Badlesmere; Paramour Pie Club, Ash, and The Yard, Faversham.
- **Food Producer, sponsored by Perrys Chartered Accountants:** Simply Ice Cream, Bonnington; Solleys Ice Cream, Ripple, and Curiously Kentish, Birchington.
- **Drink Producer, sponsored by Motorline Maserati:** Chapel Down, Tenterden; Anno Distillers, Marden, and Wise Owl Cider, High Halden.
- **Independent Food and Drink Retailer, sponsored by Illuminate Skin Clinics:** The Cheese Box, Whitstable, Margate Smokehouse, and Steve the Fish.
- **Tea shop, sponsored by Cookery Studio Kent:** Tiny Tim's Tearoom, Canterbury; Bessie's Tea Parlour, Broadstairs, and Creek Creative, Faversham.
- **Customer Service, sponsored by Fenwick Canterbury:** Three Tuns, Lower Halstow; The Village Shop and Post Office, Challock, and Longfield Butchers.
- **Pub of the Year, sponsored by Eastwell Manor:** The Compasses Inn, Crundale; Oyster Pearl, Seasalter, and The Milk House, Sissinghurst.
- **Chef of the Year, sponsored by The Canterbury Auction Galleries:** Jeff Kipp, Saltwood on the Green; Dev Biswal, The Ambrette, and Michael Fowler, Wallett's Court.
- **Restaurant of the Year, sponsored by Britelite Windows:** Marquis at Alkham; The Corner House, Minster, and Chapter One, Locksbottom.



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Helicopter search and rescue base opens at Lydd Airport

A NEW search and rescue (SAR) base began operations at London Ashford (Lydd) Airport on Friday.

The base will be on standby for any emergency rescues which are needed in the English Channel – the busiest shipping lane in the world.

Bristow Helicopters will operate the service, after being awarded a 10-year contract by Government.

Chief pilot at the base, Captain Neil Robertson, said: "Everyone at the base feels privileged to be involved in delivering such an important, lifesaving service and we are looking forward to getting started. Close working relationships with the other emergency services in the area and the military are key, and we're grateful for all the support we've received from them."



The Coastguard has provided helicopter rescue services in the south east for the past three decades. This will be the first civilian base to open.

Charles Buchanan, chief

executive of London Ashford Airport, said: "This investment by Bristow is warmly welcomed and coincides with rising passenger numbers. The year ahead is very exciting for Lydd."

Sturry ambulance smash investigation underway

INVESTIGATIONS are underway after a 12-year-old girl and her 14-year-old sister were left fighting for their lives following a crash involving an ambulance which was responding to a 999 call.

The smash took place on Island Road in Sturry, near Canterbury, at around 1.50pm on Tuesday as the girls travelled in a black Mercedes.

The three other occupants of the car – a man and woman (thought to be the girls' parents) and young boy – were all taken to the QEOM hospital in Margate with injuries after the crash.

The two girls were flown to King's College Hospital and St George's Hospital in London.

A male paramedic – working for the South East Coast

Ambulance Service (Secamb) – who had been travelling in the ambulance was also taken to hospital with suspected leg injuries after the smash.

A spokesman for Secamb said: "We can confirm that one of our ambulances was involved in a collision with a car in Babs Hill Oak, Sturry, Kent."

"The ambulance was responding to a 999 call in the area and was not carrying a patient at the time of the collision."

"Ambulance crews including critical care paramedics and two air ambulances have attended the scene to treat casualties. Our thoughts are with all those involved."

An investigation has been launched into the cause of the accident.

Rogue traders targeted

PEOPLE in Kent are being asked to report rogue traders to Kent County Council Trading Standards – to stop them causing trouble across the county.

The council says that cold callers offering to do work can cause misery and financial hardship to homeowners.

Fastrack buses boosted

The Fastrack bus scheme which carries passengers from Kent Thameside is getting a new fleet of 21 environmentally friendly vehicles.

The service provides two high frequency passenger services which link Gravesend, Bluewater and Dartford.

The Herne Bay air show

THE free Amy Johnson Memorial Air Show is due to take off at Herne Bay Seaford at 10am on Saturday.

The show, organised by Bay Promo Team, will feature a number of flying displays, including the RAF Aerobatic team the Red Arrows.

Charity cash is stolen

POLICE investigating the alleged theft of cash from a charity stall are appealing for witnesses. The theft reportedly took place between 10.10am and 10.20am at Medway Hospital on July 31. If you can help, call PC Emma Davies on 01634 792209 quoting crime reference XY/026451/15.



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Top Three Stories



1. Final request answered

Company gives £2m for Manston CPO

2. A-level results published

The county's students got their grades

3. Ambulance crash

An ambulance crashed in Sturry

The Essential Guide:



Fracking

With this week's announcement (which we look at in detail on page 11) we explore the topic



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: We sent reporter Molly Kersey out to see the damage which fly-tippers are causing to our countryside. See more on page 40.

Missed last week's...

...YOU can read the paper online via our e-Edition at www.Kentonsunday.co.uk

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Top Three Blogs



1. The problem of sequels

Why do they struggle to live up to the hype?

2. Folkestone's great

Five reasons to love the town

3. Lottery dilemma

What would you do if you won big?

Results of the KoS Online Poll

Is there too much pressure to get good grades?

- 1 Yes - 40%
- 2 No - 33%
- 3 Depends - 14%
- 4 Don't know - 13%

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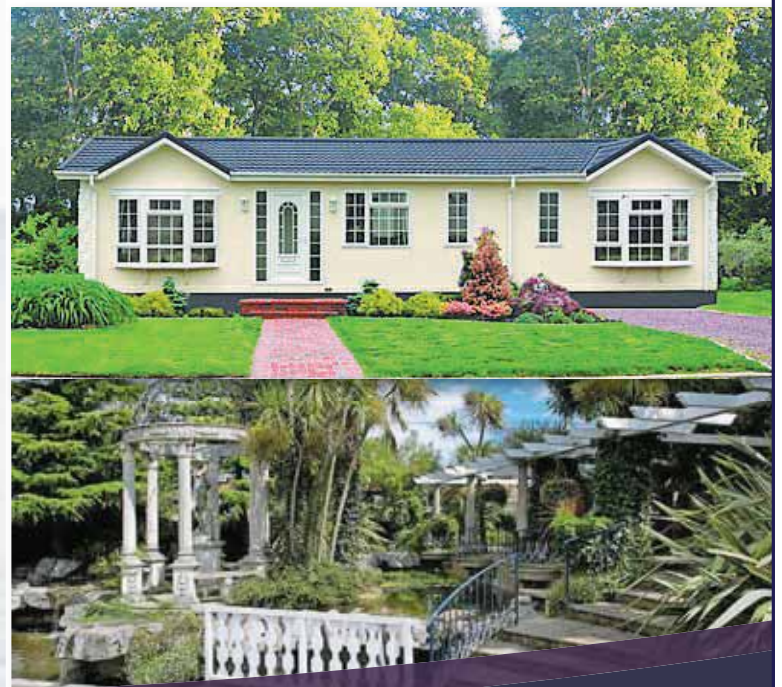
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INDUSTRIAL: Campaigners against the process have taken aim at the damage fracking could do to the environment

Activists' anger as MPs remain committed to their dash for gas

The planning process for shale gas has been cut and protesters fear the worst writes **Jamie Weir...**

THE dash for gas could be back on the county's agenda this week, as the Government hands out fresh drilling licences across the county – despite fierce public opposition – just days after planning regulations were streamlined.

The Department for Energy and Climate Change will be announcing the results of bids from oil and gas exploration companies eager to find, and exploit natural gas and oil across Kent.

While on Thursday, energy secretary Amber Rudd also boosted the shale gas industry by announcing the planning process for applications to extract gas would be streamlined.

The new licence bidding round will open up more than 80 per cent of the county's landmass to exploration, with new licences handed out potentially allowing companies to begin the process which could lead to the controversial extraction method of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

Fracking involves drilling a borehole, before injecting a water and chemical mixture – known as slick water – into the ground at high pressure, fracturing the shale rock. Proppants, which are often sand particles, are used to keep the cracks open, allowing the gas to flow out.

The new round of licencing and the streamlining of the planning process has enraged campaigners in Kent, who are furious that the Government is pushing forward with plans to exploit natural resources.

On the other side of the fence are

Kent's politicians, lining up to support the Government's stance.

Thanet South's Conservative MP Craig Mackinlay is one of those politicians, and, unlike many others, his constituency has actually seen past interest from a gas company.

Mr Mackinlay told KoS: "There was a licence in South Thanet, at Woodnesborough, in the past, but in the last few months the exploration company – Coastal Oil and Gas – have let it lapse.

"I'm given to understand that this is because they don't believe there is enough gas to make it commercially viable to extract it from the site."

However, despite being one of the only MPs in the county to sit in a constituency which actually faces possibly fracking, Mr Mackinlay is supportive of the extraction method.

He said: "I'm not opposed to fracking at all. We do need a lot more assurances as regards environmental pollution, and I wouldn't be comfortable with it taking place until robust work was done on this issue, but overall I'm not opposed in principle."

Not everyone is so happy with the new licencing round though, with East Kent Against Fracking campaigner, Julie Wassmer, taking the Government to task for speeding up planning processes and allowing new licences.

She told KoS: "While ministers are said to have become frustrated at the failure to get the UK fracking industry off the ground, they might do well to remember that the suspension of fracking in the UK was not caused by



JOBS: Those who support the industry say it provides high quality jobs

anti-fracking groups but followed earthquakes triggered by fracking which were strong enough to damage the well casing – something which potentially could have led to the migration of fracking fluid.

"So when Amber Rudd states that the Government has developed 'a regulatory system that does everything possible to allay people's concerns and protect the environment,' I am minded to ask where was this regulatory regime in 2011 when the Government first allowed fracking in Lancashire – and why on earth should we trust it now?"

Energy secretary Amber Rudd says the Government is committed to shale gas, and that its extraction will be heavily regulated to ensure the environment is safeguarded.

She said: "Oversight by the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency of shale developments makes our commitment to safety and the environment crystal clear."

Despite that, Ms Wassmer isn't thrilled by the idea of a faster planning process.

She told KoS: "In April, Ms Rudd, claimed she would 'put a rocket' under her officials 'to put the local community back in charge of their own neighbourhoods' a message that many of us would have welcomed if she had planned to extend this policy to the blocking of fracking.

"The double standard persists however because in spite of a survey conducted this month by Ms Rudd's own department showing that fracking has never been so unpopular – with only 21 per cent now in support – the Government now intends to order councils to fast-track fracking applications in what can surely be described only as a shamefully undemocratic response to the recent democratic rejection of Cuadrilla's fracking applications by Lancashire County Council.

"Precisely what's the purpose of voting for councillors in Kent if they have no power to represent us over an issue as important, and potentially life changing, to us as fracking?"

Tunbridge Wells Conservative MP and communities secretary Greg Clark says that planning needs to be faster for shale gas exploration.

Mr Clark said: "People's safety and the environment will remain para-

mount and communities will always be involved in planning applications but no one benefits from uncertainty caused by delays in planning decisions. By fast tracking any appropriate applications it will tackle potential hold ups in the system."

It's something which Mr Mackinlay agrees with, saying that we'll need the energy security which shale gas could bring us, in the future.

He said: "There are a wide range of benefits which extracting shale gas would bring the UK and local communities. Reducing our reliance on unstable foreign imports is a big benefit, as in the future energy security is going to rise in importance. No-one knows right now how much shale gas is in the ground. It has been said that there would be a minimum of 36 years worth of gas, and up to a maximum of 500 years worth. That has to be worth investigating.

"Local communities could also benefit from cash if a company extracts gas in their area, and the industry is also creating high quality jobs." That certainly isn't a sentiment echoed by south east Green Party MEP Keith Taylor.

He told KoS: "The Government is defying public opinion by handing out more licences to fracking companies. The more residents find out about the impacts of fracking, the less they want it in their area.

"Fossil fuels worsen climate change, renewable energies don't. These new fracking licences show the government either doesn't understand that, or doesn't care."



BLEAK: The picture is grim for policing across the county if budgets keep getting chopped says Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Ann Barnes

Budget cuts to have major impact on policing says commissioner

The PCC says continued cuts to the force's budget will begin to take their toll, reports **Jamie Weir...**

POLICING as we know it will change, as the force begins to feel cuts to its funding according to Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Ann Barnes.

Austerity has been the Government's mantra for the last five years as politicians wrestle to get the country's deficit under control.

It has seen the axe wielded for most public sector bodies, the county's police force has seen its share of these cuts, with falls in its funding worth millions of pounds.

However the commissioner is now warning that an extra year of austerity for the police – announced by Chancellor George Osborne in his recent spending review – will come at a direct cost to the people of Kent.

She has come up with a total figure of £124 million which will be lost from the force's budget by 2020 – that would be some 40 per cent of its current budget of £306.5 million.

The cuts have also come in for criticism from Kent Police Federation chairman Ian Pointon, who told KoS that people would start to notice changes to the service.

He said: "Over the last five years, we've had these cuts, and the force has just carried on. Officers and police staff have just worked harder, and done their best to keep delivering the service which the public are used to."

"However, that will change if aus-

terity continues, because with there will obviously be a tipping point where there are simply too few officers to carry on providing that same service."

The services the force provides have already fallen back, with lost property no longer routinely accepted by officers.

Mr Pointon continued: "Already we have too few staff to attend every single crime, and that will only get worse."

"When we announced that we wouldn't be accepting lost property in June, the public were initially angry. But once they realised it was due to the cuts in the force's budget, people started to understand why we weren't able to do it."

"We're likely to see more of this in the future, with other services we've provided in the past cut back in line with our funding."

Currently, the cuts which Kent Police have faced since 2010 are £54 million according to Mrs Barnes.

She told KoS the force could ill afford to see another cut in funding – this year, she has chosen to bolster the budget using £5.5 million from the force's reserves.

She said: "You can't keep taking out savage cuts without it having a big impact. That is the reality of the situation, and something which I believe the public in Kent have a right to be made aware of."

"We can't continue to be all things to all people with a budget, that, in five years time will have had around £100 million taken out of it...."

Ian Pointon,
Kent Police Federation chairman

"I've got a duty as the PCC to be open and transparent, and I want the electorate to know what the cuts mean to the force right now, and what they could mean in the future."

The force, says Mrs Barnes, has already made as many efficiency savings as possible, while trying to minimise staff cuts. That though, can't continue according to Mr Pointon.

He said: "If 80 per cent of the budget is staffing costs, it shouldn't take a genius to work out that after easy savings have been made, that's going to be the only place left to make cuts."

Mrs Barnes echoed this, telling KoS that since 2010, less money in the budget had led to about 500 fewer officers, and the loss of around 1,000 staff, but that would likely get higher.

She said: "Most of the funding we receive right now goes on salaries. We've already managed to save the force cash by tying up many of our systems with Essex police, and that's helped balance the books. We've also saved cash making greater use of technology, with body worn cameras and other innovations. That has insulated us from big staff cuts, but the problem is that now we've made all of those savings and are still being asked to work with less cash, it means there's nowhere else to cut."

Despite the concern, Ashford MP and former justice minister, Damian Green says that the PCC has to manage, like everyone else in a time of austerity.

Mr Green told KoS: "The police have had their spending constrained in the same way that all public sector bodies have. The police and crime commissioners are expected to manage this, and work within a tightened budget."

"This £124 million of total cuts figure has been plucked out of the air by Mrs Barnes, as she can't possibly know what the final cuts to the budget will be. In fact, nobody knows what the public spending settlement will be until it is announced by the Chancellor later this year."

That, surprisingly, is something which Mr Pointon agrees with.

He told KoS: "Right now it's impossible to actually know what the

final cuts are looking like.

"Mrs Barnes can't say with any level of certainty that this will be the reduction in her budget. However, with that said, it is a fair bet to say that there will be swingeing cuts, and I imagine the PCC's figure isn't far from what it's likely to be."

"We can't continue to be all things to all people with a budget, that, in five years time will have had around £100 million taken out of it."

Mrs Barnes also took aim at a new Government consultation on the funding formula it uses to change the way cash is distributed to forces around the country.

She branded the exercise 'nonsense', telling KoS it was difficult for the force to comment on the consultation due to the lack of information.

She said: "Currently the Home Office hasn't released any data or modelling to show us how the different systems would affect the county's funding in the future. That means we're flying blind responding to the consultation, as we have no idea what the likely impact may be."

Mr Green though, said it was crucial the force responded to the work.

He said: "It's a very important consultation, so I can't understand why Mrs Barnes has responded in this way. It will be key to setting funding for forces, so I hope, for the sake of the people of Kent, that the PCC takes a full part in the consultation."



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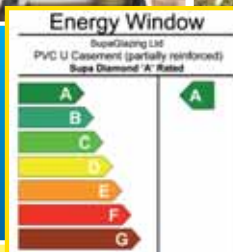
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Special investigation...

Toxic sheep dip row continues 20 years after first complaint

Two decades ago a Kent farmer who claimed to have been poisoned on the job was at the heart of legal action which could have had major repercussions for the industry. It failed, but 20 years on the debate which caused it rages on. Investigations editor **David Powles** reports...



FARMER Gary Coomber enjoys a quiet life now, surrounded by his loved ones, still working on the family farm and tending to his sheep.

It's a world away from two decades ago when he was at the forefront of legal action which could have had major repercussions, cost firms millions of pounds and brought an end to a debate which still rages to this day.

For Mr Coomber, now 55, was behind a legal challenge seeking compensation from manufacturers of sheep dip over claims toxic chemicals had caused his health problems, including a heart attack which nearly killed him.

Had he won, it could have opened the door to dozens more cases just like it from the hundreds of farmers who also claim to have been poisoned by sheep dip.

Instead the case fizzled out, but what hasn't is the debate over whether farmers have suffered ill-health and even brain damage from using dip. And now there are growing calls for the government to officially recognise the problem.

Farmers were required by law to dip their sheep with organophosphate chemicals (OP) to control serious infestations such as sheep scab from 1976 to 1992, when mandatory dipping came to an end.

And while OPs, which are also used in pesticides, were extremely effective in protecting sheep, fears have grown that regular exposure to the chemical, originally developed for germ warfare, caused ill-health.

For Mr Coomber, of Little New House Farm, in Newhouse Lane, Headcorn, sickness problems began in the summer of 1991, shortly after he had treated his sheep with the dip.

He said: "Initially I just had flu-like symptoms and a pain in my chest. The doctor



CLAIM: Gary Coomber lives in Headcorn

said it was an inflamed heart muscle.

"A year later around about the same time I was only about three miles away from home and suddenly I didn't know where I was, I was completely lost.

"I had to get my wife to come and get me because I didn't recognise anything until I saw my house. I rang the doctor and was admitted to hospital."

That night he suffered a cardiac arrest and doctors had to fight to save his life. After leaving hospital it wasn't long before he began to question the reasons behind the health problems he was facing.

He added: "Articles and studies were starting to appear about sheep dip poisoning and it was my wife who said I had that. I had about five or six years of feeling bad, really lethargic. It was like a switch would flick. One minute I would be okay, the next I wouldn't."

BACKGROUND

WHILE the toxic effects of high-level poisoning were better known, farmers weren't specifically warned against regular exposure to the solution or initially advised that any precautions or protective clothing be worn during the dipping of sheep.

Eventually the government did issue guidance leaflets and compel manufacturers of OP chemicals to add hazard warning stickers to containers.

In a 1993, report by the National Poison's Unit at Guy's and Lewisham NHS Trust, scientists wrote how 'inadequately protect workers' exposed to OPs had developed symptoms 'resembling an infectious disease'. It found there was 'a medical problem' from occupational exposure to sheep dip and called for further investigations.

In 2012, a study published in the journal of Critical Reviews in Toxicology concluded that low-level exposure to OPs could produce

lasting brain damage.

Researchers at the University College London (UCL) and Open University used evidence from 14 studies that looked at the health of 1,600 participants.

The government, meanwhile, has said it was sympathetic to farmers who were suffering ill-health but has rejected calls for an inquiry.

Speaking at a debate in parliament last month, farms minister George Eustice said he would meet victims but that an inquiry would add nothing to the conclusions of the government's independent advisers, the committee on toxicity (COT). It found no link between low-level exposure and chronic ill health.

Tom Rigby, from the support group, said they would like to hear from anyone who thinks they may have been affected and urged people to write to their MPs.

More information at www.sheepdipsufferers.uk



As question marks started to grow around the possibility that some sheep farmers were being poisoned by the dip, Mr Coomber, married to

Melissa with whom he has two children, looked into possible legal action.

Initially the case looked strong, he

had the backing of Professor William McKenna, of St George's Hospital, London, a heart specialist of world standing and several other experts.

But it came to nothing and, in his own words, "fizzled out."

Over the subsequent years, government and independently-led in-

vestigations have thrown up contradictory conclusions on the issue.

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Turn from page 15

Between 1985 and 1998, for instance, more than 600 reports of ill-health following exposure to sheep dip were received by a government adverse reaction surveillance scheme.

Issues highlighted included memory loss, problems processing information, general confusion, dizziness, headache, nausea, anxiety and restlessness.

Yet still the government doesn't recognise that regular exposure to OPs caused problems.

And this is where a new campaign group comes in. The Sheep Dip Sufferers' Support Group was set up by Lancashire farmer Tom Rigby last year. It believes at least 2,500 farmers nationwide have been affected.

He said: "For years I assumed everyone knew about this, then I became aware it had never been officially recognised, despite being the biggest farming tragedy there is. I now realise it was covered up."

The group believes that when sheep dip became mandatory, more should have been done to warn of the potential dangers and ensure they took the necessary precautions.

They also claim documents show officials were privately warned of the risks but did little to spread that knowledge.

A 1990 Health and Safety Executive (HSE) survey of farmers, released to the campaign group under an freedom of information request, said that: "Repeated absorption of small



SHEEP DIP: Between 1976 and 1992, farmers were required to dip their sheep with organophosphate chemicals

doses can have a cumulative effect and can result in progressive inhibition of nervous system."

Mr Rigby added: "OPs had a history of use in chemical weapons so they knew the risks, but thought the amounts used in sheep dip were manageable.

"Eventually they stopped it from being compulsory, so they must have known something was up."

Sheep dip containing OPs continues to be used now, however it requires a licence and the safety measures are more stringent.

But the campaign group's fight

goes on and it wants official recognition for the damage caused by OPs, which it hopes will bring better diagnosis and improved treatment.

Mr Rigby explained: "It's not compensation we are after, but at least this should be recognised as an industrial injury, so that people who

DEFRA RESPONSE

A DEFRA spokesman said: "The use of organophosphates is controlled to minimise the risks to humans and safety advice is based on the latest scientific evidence.

"The Independent Committee on Toxicity published a review in March 2014 which concluded that low-level exposure to organophosphates 'do not cause important long-term neurological toxicity in adults'.

"Defra supports the conclusion of this independent review."

are affected are able to claim benefit."

Mr Coomber says his views now haven't changed, but he believes the chances of something happening now are slim.

He added: "It's a massive cover up. If the government and companies admitted it now it would cost them too much money in compensation, millions in fact.

"I think lots of farmers will have been affected by this. I have been to a friend's funeral who died from OP poisoning. He was only 51.

"Every time a report comes out and highlights the problem, the government hit back with something to rubbish it. But this has probably cost me between five to eight years of my life."

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500	1000	1015	£96.60	£69.00
500	1200	1240	£105.00	£75.00
500	1600	1638	£166.60	£119.00
500	1800	1882	£180.66	£129.00
600	800	995	£86.80	£62.00
600	1000	1174	£102.20	£73.00
600	1200	1439	£110.60	£79.00
600	1600	1899	£172.20	£123.00
600	1800	2184	£184.87	£133.00



Width mm	Height mm	BTU	List Price	TKM Price
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400	1200	1052	£107.80	£77.00
400	1600	1390	£162.00	£116.00
500	800	859	£93.80	£67.00
500	1000	1015	£101.47	£73.00
500	1200	1240	£110.60	£79.00
500	1600	1638	£169.40	£121.00
500	1800	1882	£183.40	£131.00
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600	1000	1174	£105.00	£75.00
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600	1600	1899	£177.80	£127.00
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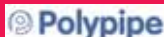
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STORY IN THE SKY: Dogfight vapour trails in the skies over Risborough Lane Cheriton, Folkestone, tell the tale of some of the action taking place over the county in the Battle of Britain

Look to the skies as the county recalls the bravery of The Few

It was the most intense day of fighting in the Battle of Britain with the skies over Kent the scene of what went on to become known as the Hardest Day. Nowhere saw more action than the fighter base at Biggin Hill and on Tuesday tributes will be paid to all those who fought, writes **Chris Murphy...**

SUNDAY, August 18, 1940, was the day when The Few of the RAF showed the German Luftwaffe once and for all who was boss.

It was the most intense day of fighting since the Luftwaffe had started trying to bomb Britain's airfields into submission – when both forces lost more aircraft than on any other day during the Battle of Britain.

On Tuesday, Biggin Hill airport will re-enact that terrifying day on its 75th anniversary, with the largest flying formation of Hurricanes and Spitfires seen in years.

Starting at 12.45pm, 18 Spitfires and six Hurricanes will fly in various formations. There will then be a flight line walk where you can see the aircraft and meet the pilots.

"We want to honour the courageous pilots, engineers, armourers, operations staff and ground crews who faced constant attack from the Nazi Luftwaffe on that day and during that period," the airport's head of communications, Simon Ames, explained.

Aviation historian Robin Brooks, who helps run the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar, where the Spitfires and Hurricanes are kept, said that August 18, 1940, was hell in the air.

He told us: "In August 1940, Britain was fighting for survival.

"In the air, a numerically superior German Air Force was being mauled by a band of airmen that Churchill called his Few.

"From July 10, the Luftwaffe had striven to destroy the airfields of Fighter Command in order to gain control of the skies above south-east England prior to a planned invasion. The culmination of the fighting came on August 18."

Biggin Hill, which was one of the main fighter bases protecting London and the south east, played a pivotal role.

"At Biggin Hill – a key sector station controlling West Malling and Lympne, and flanked by sector D with Hawkinge, Gravesend and Manston and sector B, Kenley and Croydon – No 32 Squadron with Hurricanes and No 610 (County of Chester) Auxiliary Squadron with Spitfires were to experience a day like no other," Mr Brooks said.

"From noon onward, apart from landing to refuel and rearm, they were airborne continuously to protect Biggin Hill from total annihilation.

"Their task carried on long into the evening, but despite the intense damage done to the airfield, at no time was it non-operational."

Along with Kenley airfield in Croydon, the Luftwaffe were specifically aiming to destroy Biggin Hill.



LOOKOUT: Observer Corps on Martello Tower number 4 on the Leas Folkestone. Mr AP Pellatt on the left and Mr Don Henley on the right. Sandgate Hill can be seen in the background with the junction being Coolinge Lane

"Orders were issued to the Luftwaffe from Kesselring's headquarters in Brussels stating that the targets on the 18th were to be the fighter airfields of Kenley and Biggin Hill," Mr Brooks said.

"Accordingly, 60 Heinkel 111s from Kampfgeschwader 1 were signalled to

attack the former, while Kampfgeschwader 76, with 48 Dornier 17s and Junkers 88s, were allocated to attack Biggin Hill.

"Both units were part of Luftflotte 1, based in Brussels under the command of Generalfeldmarschall Albert Kesselring. Both bomber formations

were to be escorted by Messerschmitt 109s from Jagdeschwader 3, 26, 51, 52 and 54 and Messerschmitt 110s from Zerstörergeschwader 76. Lifting off from their airfields at approximately 12.45pm, they crossed the

Continues on Page 20

Continues from Page 19

Channel to begin their attacks."

What followed was an aerial conveyor belt of bullets, bombs and death. "First to be hit was Kenley," Mr Brooks said.

"As bombs rained down on the airfield, the enemy armada was attacked by Spitfires from No. 54 Squadron and from the Kenley-based squadron No. 64.

"Further squadrons from North Weald, Martlesham Heath, Manston and Rochford also came to the aid of the base.

"In what seemed like hours but was only minutes, Kenley was left devastated, with fires breaking out everywhere and buildings and hangars either demolished or badly damaged."

The bombers then closed in on Biggin Hill, expecting similar success. But they didn't find it.

"As the Dorniers and Junkers approached the airfield, twelve Hurricanes from No. 32 Squadron and fifteen Spitfires from No. 610 (County of Chester) Auxiliary Squadron rose up to protect the base," Mr Brooks told us.

"Notice had been given of the impending raid by the Observer Corp in the valley near Brasted and the fighter control room at Stanmore, which allowed the home squadrons to get airborne to meet the attack.

"As the enemy aircraft came in low, bombs rained down on the airfield. Amid the explosions came the sound of machine guns as the fighters tore into the enemy.

"On the ground it was tin hats on, as many buildings essential to the running of the station were subject to attack."



INFORMATION: RAF Dunkirk Chain Home Radar Station near Canterbury, during the Battle of Britain

Even the Home Guard jumped at the chance to take on the airborne enemy.

Mr Brooks said: "They felt that they could not be left out and, using their rifles, fired at any enemy aircraft they could see.

"One Dornier 17 in particular was to receive their attention. Fatally wounded by earlier fire from the big guns, as it came in low over Leaves Green it felt the full force of rifle fire. The aircraft burst into flames and crashed short of the airfield.

"A newspaper report later stated that the aircraft had been brought down by the Home Guard, something that the local battalion were to bask in glory about for some time after."

Before long, the enemy planes had turned and fled.

"Once again, what seemed like hours was in fact minutes as the enemy aircraft turned for home, only to be attacked by fighters on their way," Mr Brooks said.

"At the final count, as dusk approached, 32 Squadron had lost seven Hurricanes but no pilots, although there were injuries, and 610 Squadron had lost two Spitfires, again with no loss of life.

"Overall the RAF had lost 136 aircraft, but for the Luftwaffe it had been a disastrous day both numerically and in terms of morale."

Aviation historian Anthony Moor, the author of *Detling Airfield 1915-*



DOWNED: Biggin Hill, Dornier Do17Z-2 of 9/KG76 crashed at Leaves Green on August 18, 1940, shot down by pilots of No.111 Squadron at 1.23pm

1959, told us it was the over-confidence of one man that enabled the Allies to win the air.

He told us: "Oberst 'Beppo' Schmid's 5th Directorate of the Luftwaffe High Command issued a document on August 17, 1940, stating that owing to the RAF losses in the previous six weeks, the RAF was now depleted to 430 Spitfires, Hurricanes and Defiants, of which he thought only 300 were serviceable.

"The Luftwaffe High Command assumed then that it was time to deliver the coup de theatre, thinking, incorrectly, that the RAF was on its last legs and that England's total collapse would take place in a matter of weeks.

"The German High Command laid

plans to launch powerful assaults on August 18 on RAF Kenley, Biggin Hill, Hornchurch and North Weald, the major airfields of the 11 Group in the south east, on which fighter defences in the area hinged.

"Airfields such as RAF Lympne, Hawkinge, Manston, Detling, West Malling, Martlesham Heath, Croydon and Tangmere had already suffered loss of life and severe damage during hard-fought action in the previous week.

"There were at least 32 Squadrons involved in operations to stop these planned attacks, and of course other units and airfields were involved. The radar stations at Dover, Rye, Pevensey, Dunkirk and Ventnor had also

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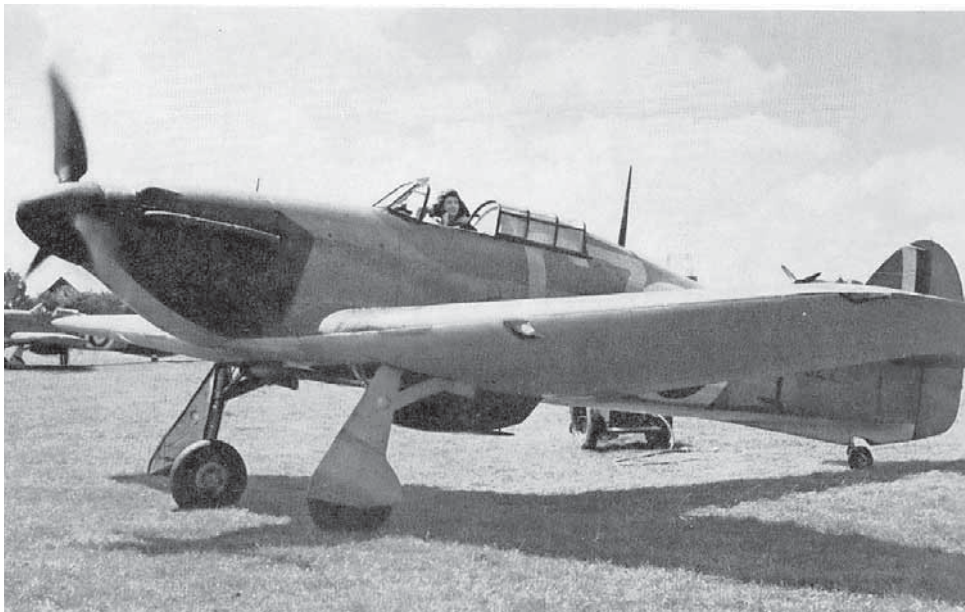
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HERO: A Hurricane of No.32 Squadron based at RAF Biggin Hill in August 1940.

been attacked; Ventnor was out of action. However, RAF Tangmere sector control was still able to direct fighters, which was an important factor."

August 17 was ominously quiet. Squadron Leader Michael Crossley, of No 32 Squadron based at Biggin Hill, made a note in his diary: "Not a single sausage, scare, flap or diversion of any description today. Amazing. Heavenly day too!"

Winston Churchill said at the time: "We should not have liked Hitler to come before we were ready to receive him, but we are quite ready to receive

him now and we shall really be very disappointed if he does not turn up.

"We can assure him that he will meet with that welcome on our shores which no invader has ever missed. This was to have been a week of German victory: it has been a week of British victory instead."

Mr Moor added: "A major effect of the August 18 raids on the outcome of the Battle of Britain was that the bulk of Ju87 Stuka units were withdrawn from action to be preserved to support the dropped German invasion

known as Operation Sea Lion.

"That operation was thwarted by the sacrifice of our young pilots and airmen who bore the brunt of these events. Those who were directly involved in the actions of August 18 are now remembered as having taken part in the Hardest Day.

"Some 50 RAF airmen were lost, missing or killed, mostly in Hurricanes. In the Luftwaffe 96 airmen were killed, missing or lost, although these figures may not be totally accurate.

"Apart from heavy Stuka losses – at

RADIO KENT RELIVES HARDEST DAY

FROM dawn till dusk on August 18th, BBC Radio Kent will be marking The Hardest Day with an hour-by-hour account of events as they unfolded seventy five years ago. Using the voices of today's pilots, historians and veterans, the personal skill and sacrifice of The Few will be told in real time as all corners of Kent came under attack.

There will also be live coverage from Biggin Hill and Capel Le Ferne as the historic flyover of Spitfires and Hurricanes takes place.

BBC Radio Kent producer Jo Burn says it's a perfect opportunity to illustrate the scale of the Battle of Britain as it raged in

the skies over the county.

"There were one hundred German planes and a hundred and thirty six British aircraft either damaged or destroyed in that twenty four hour period, and when I read the names of all those killed and wounded and those who did the damage, I realised that the Battle of Britain was about man on man, machine on machine. It's those personal stories we want to share."

A reconstruction of a scramble, as well as veterans' memories, expert analysis and outside broadcasts will reflect the greatest aerial conflict of the Second World War and those who secured our skies.

least 21 – the RAF fought the Dornier Do17, Heinkel He111, Junkers Ju88, Me110 and the Bf109."

The news of the defeat was not well received by Luftwaffe commander-in-chief Hermann Goring.

"He summoned his Luftflotte commanders and expressed, in no uncertain terms, his displeasure and contempt for their failure to produce the spectacular results of previous campaigns," Mr Moor said.

"It is true to say that neither by attacking the airfields, nor by attacking London, was the Luftwaffe likely to destroy Fighter Command."

The base at RAF Manston luckily escaped any extreme damage on the Hardest Day.

Doug Cockle, from the RAF Manston Museum, told us: "We had a few

Blenheim night fighters here and we were bombed, but not as hard as other Kent bases. We were a bit too frontline.

"We were hit harder a few days later and lost aircraft and buildings, including our swimming pool.

"After that, we had a few hit-and-run attacks with just a couple of aircraft, and then the bombers switched to attacking London, which gave us time to repair the runways – which were grass at the time, so didn't take much work."

■ A few tickets are still left for the Battle of Britain Commemoration at Biggin Hill. Visit www.biggin75.co.uk or call 01689 300005 during office hours. Net proceeds will be donated to the RAF Benevolent Fund.



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Character of coastlines to be secured for future generations

The county's coast of has always been special, creating jobs and also drawing in tourists. This week a planning document to help protect it was launched...

Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

SOME of Kent's most iconic images are captured from the coast, with the White Cliffs of Dover and the views from Thanet's coast which inspired Turner among the gems.

This week saw the launch of a new planning tool – the first of its kind in the world – which will help to protect these areas for future generations.

The Seascape Character Assessment (SCA) for the Dover Strait was launched on Monday, ensuring the areas between Dungeness and Margate on the Kent coast, and Berck to Dunkirk on the French coast – as well as everything in between – are developed in a sustainable manner.

The document, which was funded by the European Union, was drawn up by Kent County Council working in partnership with the Pas-de-Calais to create the new planning tool.

It will help marine planners to manage the Strait from both the French and British sides, capturing

the unique environment's ecological and cultural importance.

KCC's cabinet member for environment and transport Matthew Balfour says that as the busiest shipping lane in the world, it is critical that any change in the Dover Strait recognises economic, social and environmental factors.

Mr Balfour said: "The Dover Strait is an iconic part of the UK's landscape. It's part of what makes Kent special.

"With its coastal communities and marine space, the Strait is an environmental treasure trove, an area rich in heritage and history.

"It's also one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, and a growing economic hub. All of these factors make it a complex environment to manage, develop and protect.

"It's essential that we all understand, look after and develop the Dover Strait for future generations and The Seascape Character Assessment provides us with a way of doing this."

Heritage, according to KCC's coastal officer Chris Drake, is all important when considering the SCA.

He told KoS that it would be impor-

tant to ensure the coastline was saved for future generations.

Mr Drake said: "On the shoreline there have been landscape character assessments to ensure that beautiful parts of Kent are protected, and this is just a way of doing it for the coast.

"The hope of the assessment document is that it captures what people value about the environment of our seascapes, and what they feel is important to protect in the future.

"Tourism is really important to Kent, and the reason many of these people are coming is to enjoy our coastline. These areas contribute massively to our economy, so it's crucial to the county's success that they're protected for the future."

That's a view echoed by Nick Johannsen, the director of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit, which seeks to preserve the unique landscape of the AONB.

The unit helped to produce the new planning document, working alongside KCC and other groups.

Mr Johannsen said: "The Seascape Character Assessment reveals the in-

credible complexity that is often hidden when we simply look at a sea view – there is so much more than a view and the assessment provides a thorough, detailed and fascinating story which often lies beneath the waves.

"The Dover Strait includes important areas of the AONB and two of Britain's Heritage Coasts.

"I'm sure this new assessment of the Seascape Character will assist the many organisations which are involved in regenerating the area, conserving its natural beauty and encouraging people to visit and enjoy this extraordinary place in their important work."

Mr Drake says that the new SCA will help district and borough council's which have important stretches of coastline to protect them in the future.

Nick Delaney is the principal ecologist at Dover District Council. He told KoS the new planning tool would assist them in making the right decision on whether to allow development along the coast.

He said: "When considering projects on the coast the seascape

character assessment will prove a useful tool in increasing our understanding of the wider impacts of development, particularly on the low-lying coast between Deal and Sandwich where development inland, such as the Estover biomass Combined Heat and Power plant at Discovery Park, could impact the coastal land and seascape."

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BEAUTY: The natural beauty of the coast draws in tourists as well as providing business opportunities. KCC's coastal officer Chris Drake (inset) worked closely with the French on the SCA

their coastal planning though. Mr Drake says the SCA is valuable in a number of ways.

He told KoS: "The SCA has a broad reach with what it can achieve. It can tackle issues around the ecology of the marine environment, shipwrecks, offshore wind farm development and everything in between. It provides a

solid base of evidence for marine planning."

David Hutchinson, marine planner at the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) - the Government agency which licenses, regulates and plans marine activities - said the SCA would be a valuable tool for them.

He said: "The study will be used as

part of the evidence base for marine planning in the UK. The MMO produced a strategic scale seascape assessment for the South marine plan areas in July 2014.

"It's the MMOs intention to include locally-developed seascape assessments within their evidence base for marine planning purposes.

"The MMO expect to extend their programme of seascape assessments around the English coast as the marine planning process progresses."

The document will also help to support the British and French shared 20-year vision for the Strait.

That long term plan is key for the Strait according to Mr Drake.

He told KoS: "The Strait will become increasingly busy in the future, with more trade using it in the coming decades. That will create increasing pressure on the environment.

"That means that it's important decision-makers have the right tools, and knowledge to ensure that what happens is sustainable in the future."



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SICK: The QEOM Hospital, Margate (Pic: Phillip Perry) and the William Harvey Hospital (inset) are part of the trust's portfolio which could see changes in the future

'Radical change' ahead for the NHS trust failing to deliver to its patients

Chief executive Chris Bown says his trust 'will need to think of something very different' for how healthcare is provided in the future for those living in the east of the county, writes **Jamie Weir...**

RAPIDLY deteriorating finances, staff shortages and rising accident and emergency (A&E) waiting times are just some of the severe problems facing the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHFT) according to its chief executive Chris Bown.

The beleaguered trust, which has been in special measures after a damning Care Quality Commission (CQC) report last August, is now facing an almost £40 million black hole in its budget this year.

It was criticised on Tuesday by England's healthcare regulator, Monitor, which said that things needed to change at the trust.

Paul Streat, regional director at Monitor, said: "Since last year the trust has refreshed its leadership team and has made progress engaging the staff in the day-to-day running of the trust. It's encouraging to see the trust tackling the key issue underpinning many of the problems which led to it being put into special measures."

One of the senior figures who has recently joined the trust is chief executive Chris Bown, who was parachuted in to help troubleshoot problems after it was placed into special measures.

Mr Bown told KoS that there was a change in how the trust was operating, but that there was still a need for radical revisions to the delivery of healthcare across the east

AN 'INADEQUATE' TRUST

THE trust received serious criticism from inspectors when it was awarded an overall inadequate rating by the Care Quality Commission last August.

Inspectors found that the trust's hospitals failed to provide safe care; required improvement for providing effective care; required improvement for responsive care. It was also rated as inadequate for its leadership.

The report cited a poor culture, with a divide between managers and frontline staff, and staff who raised serious concerns about the delivery of care.

In fact, staff thought of the trust so poorly, that even they wouldn't recommend it as a place to work or be treated, with the number significantly lower than the English average.

Staff levels were 'insufficient' to provide good quality care, with specific concerns about levels of staffing in the emergency departments, on wards at night and in areas across the trust where children were treated.

Patients were also kept waiting for an 'excessively long' time for follow-up appointments and then, when attending the outpatients

department they also experienced considerable delays waiting to be seen.

Chief Executive Chris Bown said staff had worked hard to address these problems, with a number of initiatives brought in to ensure the trust would improve when its next CQC report was released.

He said: "'We have had a subsequent inspection. That involved a full inspection again. 50 inspectors across five hospitals."

"That report is likely to be available in October. We will have to wait and see what that says."

of the county in the future.

He said: "From the point of view of what the shape of healthcare in east Kent will look like, no decisions have been made yet. Work is taking place right now to decide how we can make services both clinically and financially sustainable in the future."

"It's likely to require some radical changes to how healthcare is provided, so we'll look to consult on options at the beginning of next year."

"Radical because we know that the services, as they are currently deployed, are unlikely to remain a safe way of providing services in the future because of the recruitment challenges we face. We know that

with the size of numbers we're talking about financially it is unlikely to be something we can achieve by saving money on paperclips, or sacking a few managers."

"It's not going to be something which can be resolved through small and incremental changes; we need to think of something very different."

Those 'radical' changes will need to address a series of issues with the trust, which manages hospitals in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone, Dover and Margate.

The big issues at EKHFT, according to Mr Bown are threefold. Staffing levels, finances and achieving

targets are the key problems at the trust.

He said: "We're working to ensure that we have safe staffing levels after the previous CQC report found problems with the level of staffing. However because of the broad challenges with recruiting, which is affecting the whole of the NHS, we are having to use high cost agency staff to fill those gaps."

"As a trust, we're projecting a deficit. We went into a deficit position in 2014-2015, and that has grown to a project-

ed figure of £37 million on a turnover of some £550 million. That deficit relies on us delivering a savings programme of £16 million. That is a significant challenge to us, and something that we have to address."

"The first issue is that ensure that we have safe staffing levels, we have increased it, but because of the challenges we are experiencing to recruit, we are having to use

"To ensure that we deliver and achieve the elective waiting time list, and the referral waiting times, we are having to contract out activity to the private sector. That obviously comes at a premium cost to us, which is contributing to the financial challenge to us."

"There are also aspects around providing and managing complex acute services at three sites. The costs of maintaining acute



PLANS: Chris Bown is working on a solution



FUTURE?: The Kent and Canterbury Hospital is unlikely to be replaced by a 'super hospital'

'CULTURE OF BULLYING'

RECRUITMENT at the trust has struggled ever since the CQC report said that the trust had a 'culture of bullying and harassment'.

An NHS survey of the trust, found that almost half of staff said that they felt they had been bullied, or harassed in 2014.

In 2013, 31 per cent of employees at the trust had complained of bullying, but in 2014, it had risen to 42 per cent.

Trust chief executive Chris Bown said that things had changed.

He said: "With regards to the

bullying and harassment, its clearly something we have taken incredibly seriously and have established what we call a cultural change programme ensuring that we address that unacceptable culture which exists in this trust.

"I think we still have some way to go, as we all know culture is something that takes some time to change.

"However, I know, after talking to some 4,000 staff of the 7,500 the trust employs, that we are moving in the right direction.

"Now whether that will come through in the next CQC report (due out later this year) only time will tell."

According to a senior trust source the hospital averages around a 10-12 per cent retention of staff, with about one in 10 choosing to leave every six months.

Mr Bown said that he would like to see retention at a much lower rate within the trust. He said that he would like to target around seven per cent which is closer to the national average.

SUPER HOSPITAL SHELVED

PROPOSALS to build a new multi-million pound 'super hospital' in Canterbury are likely to be shelved, according to chief executive Chris Bown.

The plans, which would have seen accident and emergency services centralised, are highly unlikely to be taken forward.

That's because of a chronic shortfall

in funding, with no cash available for pay for any possible new building.

Mr Bown told KoS: "Unless someone can give me £600 million, it won't move forward because that's the sort of money we are talking about. With the situation as it is today, any new large hospital does not seem like a practical solution, so we need to think of other ways of doing things."

services on three sites provide a challenge, and even if we had all the money in the world, there are still problems with recruiting for these services. We're trying to recruit 10 new A&E staff, but frankly, so is the rest of the NHS which makes it difficult."

One of the key things the trust is being pushed by Monitor to work on are its A&E waiting times. The Government imposed a minimum standard, which means that 95 per cent of people who arrive at A&E depart-

ments must be treated within four hours. Currently the trust is failing to achieve that, with Mr Bown saying that they've tended to plateau around the mid 80s.

In fact, it has failed to achieve the waiting time required by Government in every quarter since it was put into special measures.

Mr Streat said: "The trust needs to harness its improved staff culture to focus efforts on speeding up how quickly patients are seen in A&E."

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CHALLENGE: Take the Double 100 Cycle Challenge and raise funds for the air ambulance

Get on your bike to raise cash for aerial life-savers

Kent's Air Ambulance needs your help to keep its vital service in the air and saving lives...

As the popularity of cycling soars following Britain's Chris Froome's second Tour de France win, the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance is asking everyone to get on their bikes to help the charity.

The life saving group, which responds to emergency situations, and only this week air-lifted two young girls to hospital following a bad crash in Sturry, is looking for cyclists eager to challenge themselves in its annual bike ride next month.

Last year's Double 100 Cycle Challenge saw more than 300 riders raise a whopping £45,000 to keep Helicopter Emergency Medical Service flying.

The charity relies almost entirely on donations, and this year the air ambulance wants to raise even more.

The challenge will take adventurous riders over a course which goes from a helicopter base at Marden to another at Redhill. There are two courses riders can choose from, with one taking cyclists over a 100 mile route, and the other slightly less at 100 kilometres.

This year the route will take participants down a special 25-mile section which celebrates the charity's 25th anniversary.

This year the Double 100 challenge will see a former air ambulance paramedic riding alongside one of his former patients.

Andy Curran suffered serious injuries after a cycling accident four years ago.

The 44-year-old had been out training on his bicycle when he crashed. Paramedic Stu Plumley gave the rider emergency treatment by the roadside, and after three months spent in hospital and further recuperative care after his discharge, he's now back on the road.

He'll take part in the Double 100 alongside Mr Plumley.

Dover man Peter Fletcher is another former Air Ambulance patient who will be taking part in the ride.

He was involved in a crash with a car, suffer-



DONATIONS: Your cash funds the service

ing multiple injuries in the collision.

Mr Fletcher said: "I have become a lifelong supporter of the air ambulance. It is appropriate, given my accident, that I have signed up for the Double 100. My year has been planned toward this event and it has helped my recovery."

The event has managed to attract a number of commercial sponsors, one of which is Fidelity Worldwide Investment.

Vicki Haxton, senior manager corporate citizenship, said: "We are delighted to support the air ambulance and help raise money for this incredibly worthy cause."

"The air ambulance is a vital service in this area and we recognise the significant contribution they make towards saving lives in our community. We are looking forward to many of our employees participating in the event."

The event – now in its fifth year – is open to any cyclist who fancies a challenge, with registration costing just £15.

To register or to find out more visit www.ks-sairambulance.org.uk/involved/Double100

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Whatever grades you get you still have options

If your A-levels and GCSE results are not what you expect, then **DO NOT PANIC**. There is much that you can do, as **Sarah Linney** discovers...

IT probably feels like the most important day of your life.

The end product of two years' hard work – or even your entire school life. The qualifications that will either pave the way to what you want to do next – or, if things go wrong, stand immovably in your way by their absence.

Right? Wrong. Your exams are important, but they're far from the be-all and end-all of your future career – and there are a million and one ways forward if things don't go to plan.

"It isn't the end of the world, and no matter what happens, there are plenty of options," explained private tutor John Nichols (pictured right), who tutors children across south-east London and also covers north Kent.

"As a parent, you can prepare in your own mind what some of those options are, so you aren't panicking and can provide useful advice."

A former science teacher at Aylesford School Sports College near Maidstone, John works for Tutorfair, an online network for tutors, and teaches biology, chemistry and history to A-level, physics to GCSE and elementary maths and English. He also tutors for the 13-plus and the 11-plus.

"You shouldn't be angry. You are entitled to ask your child 'did you work as hard as you could?', but don't just accuse them of not trying, or say they are rubbish, as they're likely to feel much worse," he said.

"Don't tell them about what they could have done – think about what they want to consider now. The whole point is for your child to make a positive next step."

If your child and their teachers are genuinely surprised by a grade, you may want to ask for a remark. The fee – probably about £15 to £30 – is usually waived if the grade changes.

Otherwise, there are effectively two options for those who have not done as well as they hoped: try again, or change your plans.

If your child decides to retake their exams, it's advisable to pay for a photocopy of their exam script so they can see where they went wrong.

Bear in mind, though, that they'll have to wait until next summer to re-sit – there are no longer January re-

takes – and will only get that one opportunity, as a new syllabus comes in September next year.

Otherwise, your child might want to look at changing their A-levels or even reconsidering their choice of career.

"If your grade was just a bit lower than expected, don't rush into changing things if it's what you want to do and are interested in," John said.

"But only retake if you are sure you can do better. Otherwise, you probably need to readjust your long-term aim."

"That can be very difficult, but there are often many more options than students realise."

There may be other jobs you want to do and other ways of working in that field."

The university clearing process – where students who have not made the grades for either their first or second choice universities can try to get onto other courses with vacancies – is another option, but John cautions against panic.

"Clearing encourages hasty decisions, so make sure you know what courses, universities and regions you're considering, and what ones you're not," he said.

"Don't just accept anything. Don't



CHOICES: Don't panic if your results are not what you expected or wanted. You do have options available to you

decide three years of your life in 25 minutes. Sometimes your original university will still accept you if you are not far off your grades."

Another option is to take a year out, get some work experience and think about whether you need to go to university at all.

"If you want to do law, you could get work in a legal firm for a year, or in a bank if you want to work in finance," John said.

"Often you don't need a degree, or can get a degree later. You could even go into business yourself."

An often-overlooked group are the students whose results are better than expected, who also

have some thinking to do.

"UCAS allows you to upgrade your university if you have done well. But don't rush into scrapping a university that you have visited, and liked enough to make it your first choice, to go to a 'better' university that you have never visited," John said.

"Parents shouldn't force their child into upgrading even if they get three As."

"If it's something you're considering, prepare yourself in advance. As long as you've met your offer from your original university, you keep that place no matter what, unless you find another university that accepts you and decide to turn

your original place down."

More important than anything, however, is keeping your perspective.

"A lot of what I do is around emotional wellbeing – trying to make sure students leave school not just having done well academically, but in one piece in their head," John said.

"This is a very stressful time for children, and parents' main role is to support them in making a decision. There are always many options, but it is very easy for young people to lose track of that."

"But just look at Alan Sugar, Richard Branson or Mother Teresa. They didn't do brilliantly at school, but they did pretty well afterwards."

... AND ADVICE FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES:

THE Association of Colleges, which is the membership organisation for colleges in England, is also offering students tips on how to handle results day and the important decisions that follow:

■ **Confirm your place:** Once you've received those all-important results in UCAS Track, make sure you contact the college or university to confirm your place.

■ **Seek out advice:** If you haven't quite got the grades you wanted, don't panic! There will be more places on offer this year. Talk to your local college and ask for advice about all the options out there or get into the clearing system. You may be able to re-sit

exams or find a different university or course which is suitable for you.

■ **Be clear about clearing:** Even if you've got the grades you want, you can still go through clearing to go to a different university or college. If you're going through clearing, make sure you have everything you need – namely, a telephone, a clearing guide (use the UCAS website or there will be one in most newspapers) and a notebook and pen. You'll need them for calling universities and colleges to find out what is on offer depending on your grades. If you have grades above your firm offer you can use UCAS Adjustment to trade up to another course/university-college.

■ **Consider all the options:** If you've changed your mind about taking the route to university, investigate your local college. They offer technical and professional qualifications at a range of levels such as BTECs, NVQs, City and Guilds and also Foundation Degrees or Higher National Diplomas, for example. These qualifications often include working directly with employers on placements so it is an excellent experience.

■ **Research apprenticeships:** If you're looking for a higher education opportunity but without the university tuition fees, it may be possible to find a Higher Apprenticeship. This is a great way to study for a degree level qualification

whilst working in a real workplace environment. Many local and national companies now offer apprenticeships. Colleges can help you find the right one and you can search for apprenticeships at www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

■ **And finally, don't get disheartened.** Whether you have received the grades you wanted or not, there is something out there that is right for you and will help to get you on your chosen career path. Don't panic, look at all your options, do your research and get advice from reliable sources such as careers advisers. There's also the option of taking a gap year and maybe getting some work experience before going on to further study.



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FORAGER: John Wright talks fellow foragers through the story of this fungi

Foraging for our food is a human instinct claims mushroom expert

Foraging for food in the countryside is growing in popularity, but when it comes to picking fungi in the wild, it's crucial to ensure they are safe, otherwise it can be deadly. **Jamie Weir** finds out more...

IF you go down to the woods today, you could be in for a surprise, because while most of us just pop to the local supermarket if we want some mushrooms, a new breed of forager is getting out into the countryside to pick their own.

The rise in foraging for food has been a result of a growth in the public's interest in just where our food comes from. Farmers' markets have sprung up, while TV chefs have led the charge, regularly advocating the health, and taste benefits of buying more sustainably and locally produced food.

One TV chef has been a particularly vocal advocate of returning to a less processed, more natural and sustainable diet - Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall.

His popular River Cottage TV show was based on a return to the ideals of growing your own vegetables, raising livestock and hunting out your own naturally grown treats through foraging for food. When Mr Fearnley-Whittingstall needs guidance on foraging for mushrooms, he turns to John Wright, who has authored four River Cottage handbooks on the subject.

Mr Wright, a renowned foraging expert, will be bringing his skills to Tunbridge Wells in October, to teach people how to forage for wild mushrooms successfully, and, perhaps more importantly, safely.

The forager has more than 30 years of experience at finding edible native fungi, sampling around 120 varieties

in his time as a forager. That figure pales when compared with the total number he might sample though, with Mr Wright telling KoS that there are more than 8,000 varieties of the larger fungi in the UK.

He said: "There are about four times as many different types of fungi in the UK as there are plants.

"Fungi is key to most plant growth, and key to life on earth, so it's obviously of incredible importance."

That importance to the rest of the environment is because of what is known as a mycorrhizal relationship.

That means the fungi has colonised a host plant's roots, using it to extract valuable sugars to help it grow.

In return the fungus is able to pass over more water and minerals to the plant, creating a 'mutualistic' relationship where both plant and fungus rely on one another to flourish.

"It's a true symbiotic relationship, with both the host and the fungi benefitting," explains Mr Wright.

He continued: "If we didn't have fungi, then the vast majority of plants simply wouldn't be able to grow."

That crucial interplay between fungus and the rest of the Earth's life could be why Mr Wright is so passionate about foraging, and reconnecting people to the world of mushrooms.

He told KoS he believes each and every one of us has an innate drive to go and find our own food.

He said: "I think that foraging is one of the instincts of humans. You take people out on a foray to find fungi, and you see them slip into this in-



HUDDLE: The group crowd around

stinctual style, with people being rewarded with mushrooms for following it.

"I've seen it hundreds of times; people's eyes change, and they absolutely relish finding the different fungi. There's something about it which excites them.

"Before agriculture there was no other way of getting food apart from hunting. Foraging was part of people's lives, and that's why it's such a natural thing for us to do."

However that art of foraging has largely been lost in the UK, with most people content to simply pop to the local shops, rather than take a wander into the wilds for their supper.

Despite some saying that foragers are stripping woodland of fungi, Mr Wright says that in the UK, mush-



FUNGI: John shows off a mushroom

room picking isn't leading to any drop in fungus populations.

In fact, Mr Wright puts the proportion of people who aren't likely to ever forage at around 95 per cent of the country's population but it isn't that high everywhere.

He said: "Our European neighbours have been foraging for many years, and are much more experienced with it than we are. That could be because we haven't suffered as much hunger in the last few hundred years, whereas many European countries have, as armies have marched over their lands."

Foraging is so popular, that in Europe families have been known to hand the best sites to forage down the generations, while in France foraged mushrooms can be taken to the phar-

macy to ensure they're safe for consumption.

Safety, according to Mr Wright is very important, with many different fungi species deadly for humans.

He told KoS: "It can be lethal, but it isn't as long as you know what you're doing. We wouldn't get into a car and drive at 80mph around the M25 if we'd never driven before, and in the same sense, if you don't have any knowledge or experience, it isn't a good idea to go out and pick mushrooms."

Foraging for mushrooms is though, far less risky than driving with just one person dying in any five year period on average.

According to Mr Wright, the split between deadly and delicious is fairly even.

He said: "In the UK about 25 varieties are absolutely delicious, but there are another 25 which can be absolutely deadly."

Mr Wright has been teaching people to forage at the Moon Down's site near Tunbridge Wells since 2011.

He's looking forward to this year's visit telling KoS: "My annual visit to Moon Down is always exciting. The varied habitat produces a wealth of interesting and often tasty fungi.

"It's one of the best places in the UK to go foraging, and I think this year is going to be absolutely fantastic."

He will be leading foraging at the site on October 13 and 14. To find out how to join the group, visit www.moondown.co.uk



Stormy test for cricketers at Canterbury

All eyes were on the women's side as they stepped out at St Lawrence to take on the Aussies, reports **Jamie Weir**...

THE men's Ashes series has received most of the national attention after the squad regained the title at Trent Bridge last Saturday.

But this week, it was the women's turn to play the tourists, with the Kia Women's Test getting underway at The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence on Tuesday. It was the first time the women's Ashes had ever come to Kent's home ground.

Kent and England captain Charlotte Edwards was leading the charge for the women's Ashes, and had high hopes for her 23rd Test as it started.

After losing the toss to Australia, who chose to bat first, the English side struggled on day one, only managing to take eight tourist wickets for 268 after 97 overs.

England didn't fare much better when they did manage to get to the crease,

with the Aussie's dismissing them for 168. That left the tourists with a first innings lead of 106.

Day three saw a turbulent day at Canterbury as Australia cruised to a solid lead over England of 196.

Torrential rain, with thunder and lightning put a dampener on the day, stopping play for large chunks of the day.

During the 38 overs and two-and-a-half hours of action the St Lawrence witnessed, the Australian side looked dominant, adding a further 90 runs to their total for four wickets.

The final day of the test saw England continue their attack, but struggling to get runs on the board.

As KoS went to print, the game was ongoing, with England's batsmen fighting.

The scoreline was 55 for five, leaving the English women trailing the tourists by 205, with five wickets remaining.



CEREMONY: The teams take to the pitch for the first women's test match at Canterbury



FIGHTING: England's women were under pressure from the Australians and the weather



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CHANNEL: Some people are hoping to cross the Channel

THE WIDER CRISIS

JORDAN provides asylum for a huge number of refugees from areas including Syria and Iraq. The Syrians who are escaping from the ongoing violence in their country still make up the majority of Jordan's refugee population.

Some 20 per cent of Syrian refugees are living in refugee camps, and the remaining number are living in non-camp settings, according to the UNHCR.

Germany and Sweden remain two of Europe's popular migrant destinations – with 97,275 and 39,905 people seeking asylum there in 2014.

Italy, Greece and France have also been affected.

The number of migrants making their way to Italy reached 50,000 earlier this year following the rescue of more than 5,000 people in the Mediterranean. More than 3,000 migrants were saved from 15 separate boats that set off from Libya in June – a huge rescue effort that involved the Italian authorities and a number of naval ships from the UK, Germany and Ireland.

The controversy that surrounds an ongoing Calais migrant crisis

Molly Kersey speaks to a university lecturer about the ongoing migrant crisis and need for a solution

THE words 'Calais migrant crisis' have been widely used in recent months.

With thousands of migrants currently camped in Calais, hoping to gain access to the UK by crossing the Channel, pressure on both British and French governments to try and find some kind of a solution is growing.

The desperate plight of the migrants willing to risk their lives to enter the country has ended in tragedy numerous times.

Nine migrants have died in and around the Channel Tunnel since June, including a 13-year-old boy – whose body was found on top of a Channel Tunnel train, and a Sudanese man, who was found dead after 1,500 migrants tried to storm the Eurotunnel terminal in Calais.

A Sudanese man was also arrested in Folkestone after making his way through the 31-mile long tunnel.

And the way that the crisis has been addressed has been subject to no end of controversy.

Prime Minister David Cameron recently came under fire for his description of the migrants trying to reach Britain as a 'swarm'.

Fences that the UK government spent some £7 million erecting

REFUGEES MAKING THEIR WAY TO SAFER COUNTRIES

MANY of the migrants currently seeking asylum in Europe are fleeing violence or escaping from war-torn countries – with the situation in Calais being part of a wider crisis in Europe caused by this displacement.

Data from the UN Refugee Agency said Eritrea was top of the list of countries of origin for people who were seeking asylum applications in the UK during the

12 months up until March this year. Its data showed there were more than 3,000 applications – with many people fleeing from a brutal regime. The UN recently released the results of a year-long investigation into human rights in Eritrea which reportedly detailed "systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations", including torture, national service and forced labour.

Syria, Iran and Afghanistan were also included on the list – countries that have both seen civil unrest and war.

Syria and Iran saw some 2,000 applications and there were more than 1,000 from Afghanistan.

UN figures also suggest that by the end of July, 62 per cent of those who reached Europe by boat this year were from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan.

around the Calais border have also been criticised by French Police, who say the measure is just going to push the problem somewhere else rather than offering a solution to it.

John Fitzgibbon, senior lecturer in politics and international relations at Canterbury Christ Church University, thinks that Britain and France need to work together, and they can't solve the crisis without help.

"Only the EU can solve this issue. Britain can't solve it alone," he said.

"Closing the Channel Tunnel is not going to solve the problem. You can't push people away, it's not going to work. You can't just build a high wall

and put guards with guns on it. People will keep coming, it's unavoidable. You have to go back and say – why are they coming?

"To deal with it you need to put in a system. You can say this is how you do it legally."

And he says the number of migrants coming to Britain pales in comparison with those going to a number of other countries.

"It's actually quite difficult to understand because at the moment we have got David Cameron using inflammatory language and saying there are swarms of migrants coming over. But there are about 3,000 in the

camp at Calais this year, and about 50,000 refugees have landed in Italy. So a lot of the other states are looking at Britain and saying 'you're complaining about this? This is nothing!' Looking at it from a Kent perspective, it's a lot of people, but from the bigger, wider perspective it's not much at all.

"There are one million refugees in Jordan right now. It's not a crisis for us, it's a crisis for countries like Italy and Germany. There are a lot of people coming to Britain but there are a lot more coming into Sweden and places like that.

"Hundreds of thousands of people are crossing the Mediterranean into

Italy and Greece. You are meant to apply for refugee status in the country that you land in, so Italy and Greece are saying 'it's out of control and we can't deal with it, help us'."

He says refugees are travelling to safer countries from a number of different areas (see box).

"People are running away from brutal governments, places where they are tortured.

"They are thinking – we are dying in Syria, the chaos in Afghanistan is still going. We have all seen what Isis are doing. Would you want to stay? It's very difficult to stop refugees from coming because you would have to stop the wars, and that's not going to happen. So we have to find a way of processing the refugees coming here," he explained.

"Are you going to have an EU system where 100,000 refugees come and so a certain country gets a certain number of refugees? Do we make refugee camps? That's what Jordan has done. How are we going to deal with refugees, are we going to process them by country?

"I couldn't tell you what the answer is, but the main thing is Britain has to work with the EU on this. Everyone is passing the buck and no one is making a decision."



PENINSULA: On sale and in demand, the 468-acre site forms part of the peninsula that (inset) juts out into the English Channel. The shingle plot has a minimum value of £1,500,000

Dungeness Estate's stark beauty proves hit with potential buyers

One of Europe's largest expanses of shingle with its own unique beauty and an abundance of rare plants and wildlife – as well as being the on-time home of controversial artist and director Derek Jarman – is up for sale. **Chris Murphy** finds out a little more about the isolated 468-acre site...

WHAT has been described as 'Britain's only desert' is up for sale – with a minimum value of £1.5 million.

Better known as the Dungeness Estate, the 468-acre site forms part of a peninsula on the county's southern coast near Lydd, which extends about three miles out into the English Channel flanking the Dungeness Power Station.

Would-be buyers should note, however, the power station, railway station and lighthouse are not up for grabs and will remain in private hands.

All year round, visitors flock to the area, which includes the tiny cottage home of controversial artist and director Derek Jarman, who died in 1994 after going into hiding there.

The sale of what is being called an 'extraordinary and incomparable landscape of international importance' is being handled by estate agent Strutt & Parker.

Mainly shingle and sand, the site gives the impression of being a desolate flatland.

However, it is one of England's most famous pieces of open land, with a collection of scattered dwellings, plus old railway coaches, fishing huts and boats.

Its stark beauty is matched by its

wildlife, which is of international importance for its plant and invertebrate communities and birdlife.

Heading the sale is Mark McAndrew, who leads the firm's Estate and Farm Sales department.

He said: "Dungeness is one of Britain's most important and spectacular landscapes. It has appeared on numerous record covers and in television advertisements. It has been described as Britain's only desert."

"There is nothing like it. It has considerable potential for increased income from tourism on top of the substantial income it already produces. We believe it will attract a range of investors as well as conservation bodies. I can safely say, that in my 25 plus years at Strutt & Parker, I have never sold or will ever sell, anything quite like the Dungeness Estate."

And Maurice Ede, one of the trustees of the Dungeness Estate, added: "The estate has been in a family trust for many years and it is with some sadness that the trustees have decided it is time to sell."

"The family trust that owns the estate was created by the late Mr G T Paine in 1964. During his and the trust's tenure, management has been aimed at preserving this unique and spectacular property."

"It is often said that this distinctive and undisturbed landscape is unlike any other part of the United King-



BEAUTY: The area's stark beauty has beguiled visitors for many years

dom. I have known it intimately for 40 years and never fail to be moved by it on my regular visits."

A spokesman for the agent told us: "The phones have been going crazy with people interested in the estate."

"The buyer could be anyone - perhaps someone looking for a trophy purchase or a company looking to make an investment."

There is a decent income from the estate, which is currently generating more than £130,000 per annum from a range of leases, licences and other activities.

These include the freehold ground rents of long term residential leasehold properties, commercial fishing agreements and income from licences allowing the movement of shingle

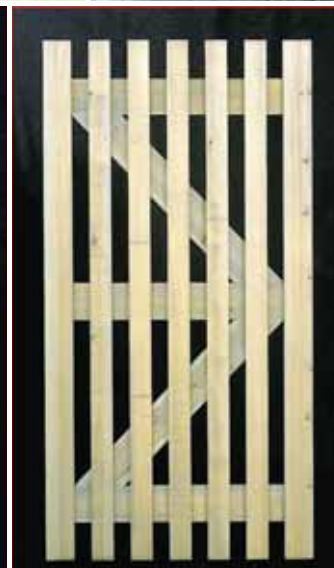
to protect the power station and nearby coasts.

Mr McAndrew added: "Unique is often an overused word in relation to property, but Dungeness is surely worthy of the title. It is an outstanding investment opportunity with a history and importance that will surely appeal to a wide audience from home and possibly abroad."

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Women Seeking

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RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes, very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busy brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 4288 Box No: 418117

ESSEX lady, mid 60's, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. P's call. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4298 Box No: 418167

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

ANN, young looking 40yrs seeks broadminded man for any age/location for no strings discreet times, games and more. Tel No: 0906 515 4290 Box No: 412369

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. Tel No: 0906 515 4291 Box No: 366019

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

LAUREN, 32yrs, recently divorced, own home and 2 kids seeks single dads or older chap. Text only to Mailbox No: 4127590

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

KAREN, 51yrs, never been married and does not want to be. Just wants a nice kind hearted chap for dates, texts etc. Text only to Mailbox No: 4032409

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50's, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTm professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569

RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517

ALISON 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416497

DEBORAH 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211

SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171

JACKIE 32, attractive professional, very smart and feminine, long brown hair, seeks smart, confident, older male who knows how to treat a lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416297

BECKY 23, classy blonde, long blonde hair, blue eyes seeks loving older guy to spoil and pamper her. Discretion assured/guaranteed. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416233

LINDA 26, cheeky, curvy brunette, a little shy at first, likes to look after herself, seeks dark haired male for discreet naughty but fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416195

TERESA 39, petite, cuddly and bubbly seeks kind older male to travel, have fun, and take care of, pamper and flirt with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416081

LUCY stunning tall brunette, looking for exciting times, seeks like-minded, adventurous male who is willing to try anything once or maybe even twice! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416079

PETITE blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841

ANGIE attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being sociable, meals in/out, WLTm honest, fun male for possible fr. looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827

LISA attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549

SUE 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTm kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735

WIDOW 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475

INTELLIGENT funny guy without a huge ego required for damaged heart. Casey 39, size 10, curves in all the right places, pretty, kind, loving, genuine, romantic and available. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415509

Men Seeking

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MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

ALAN, 49yrs, kind chap with own building business, been broken hearted and seeks kind caring lady, looks unimportant. Text only to Mailbox No: 4105813

50YR old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for winning, dining and fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719

69YR old male, professional, 5ft 10ins, fit, medium build, young outlook, reliable, sincere, likes most things, seeks slim, slender, uncomplicated lady. Kent/Surrey. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418531

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175

BARRY 49, 6ft, well built, kind, affectionate, loving, seeks special lady for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 393855

MALE 70's, fit, looking for lady to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416663

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

RICHARD 63, N/S, clean-shaven, likes meals out, days out, classic cars, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418517

JOHN young 50, tall, slim, hardworking, seeking business/professional female for discreet meetings, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418461

JONATHAN good looking, considerate, long curly hair, N/S, seeks tall, slim female, 30-45. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418451

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013

YOUNG

64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539

ASHFORD male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks like-minded female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845

55YR old male, 5ft 9ins, slim, likes swimming, pool, seeking female for fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418265

COMPANION sought, 50-60's by slim, young looking 65yr old man for cinema, music, eating, drinking, talking and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418257

JOHN nice looking, brown curly hair, gentle, understanding, seeks tall, slim lady for daytime no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418207

BRIAN happy go lucky, genuine, loving, likes nights in, DVDs, meals out, seeking genuine lady for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418197

MALE widower, N/S, likes reading, walking, WLTm lady 50-70 for friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418173

COME dine with me. Attractive black British male 50 yrs, 6ft, medium building, working, GSOH, romantic and genuine WLTm similar female. Text only to Mailbox No: 4763687

PETE 49, slim, 5ft 7ins, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077

MALE widower, N/S, seeks buxom lady, 50-70, likes reading, 60's music, pub quizzes and crosswords. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417905

BRIAN 71, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, music, walks, seeks female with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417697

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970



MALE 71, Tidy, O H A C W L T M Lady late 60's early 70s for easy friendship. Likes animals. Text only to Mailbox No: 4757205

GOOD looking fit male, romantic kind and passionate, with lots of love to give WLTm a mature lady 55 to 65 for LTR. Text only to Mailbox No: 4760779

MICK 50, seeks attractive female for nice times out, genuine calls only. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417691

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719

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49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929

Gay Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

FEMININE, sexy, cross-dresser, non-smoker, seeking cross-dresser gay or bi guy for fun. Must be non-smoker. Text only to Mailbox No: 4866072

JESSICA, 53 yrs old, feminine, sexy, smooth body seeking gay or bi man for fun, must be non-smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418713

MALE likes CD, seeking similar male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418513

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SPEEDY: Some of the Motorbase Performance team's cars in action including their homegrown BTCC car (top left)

All Pics: Peter Still/PSP Images

Wrotham motor racing team on track for its best year yet

Reporter **Jamie Weir** meets the racers going full-throttle to beat the big boys and win even more titles

THE high-octane, thrill seeking world of motor racing is not normally associated with the quiet, rural Garden of England.

However, tucked away in a corner of the county lies one of Kent's best kept secrets – one of Europe's largest and most successful motor racing teams.

Motorbase Performance, which first took to the road in 2004, is that team.

Hidden away from the crowds, on a quiet industrial estate in the sleepy village of Wrotham, Motorbase Performance has seen successes in a string of championships.

In fact, it has tasted victory in every championship it has competed in, including the prestigious Porsche Carrera Cup, British GT and British Touring Car Championships (BTCC).

It's an enviable record, and one which team manager Oly Collins is understandably proud of, particularly when the racing group's humble beginnings are taken into consideration.

He told KoS: "We've been based in Wrotham ever since the team first started around 10 years ago.

"In that time Motorbase has grown from being a small, single car, independent team which was run as a family business, into a much bigger team which can compete at the highest levels in more than just one championship."

Despite the idyllic setting at the foot of the North Downs, the smell of motor racing hangs over the area, with Brands Hatch a mere five minute drive away.

Mr Collins said that was a particularly welcome coincidence.

He said: "We're less than two miles from Brands Hatch which is great, as we tend to race there quite a bit, and also use it for testing the cars. Having a big track just down the road is brilliant for us."

As an independent team, Motorbase doesn't have the same backing as the average factory, or manufacturer group taking to the track against them.



And yet despite that, it manages to punch well above its weight.

Mr Collins said: "We're nowhere near as well resourced as the big manufacturer teams, so we do a huge amount of our work in house, with all of the team happy to get involved in different aspects, even when they aren't specialists.

"We have one of the best fabricators in the pit lanes who works for the team, and he does all of our metal work. That means we can build shells, crash structures, and all other metal work for the car on the premises. We also take on tasks like all of the painting at the base in Wrotham.

"This is on-going all year round but none more so than from December through to April, with things really getting busy between February and March when we do our pre-season testing. I keep a close eye on everything, and find that's normally the busiest period; when we're gearing up to get the cars on the track."

Mr Collins has witnessed much of the transformation since joining the team in 2008, with one of the biggest

moments coming in 2012 when Motorbase entered a new era as a constructor after it successfully built its own next generation touring car.

The car – with a Ford Focus ST base – managed to storm to its first win just three races into the season in the BTCC.

"There was a big regulation change in BTCC in 2011, with the championship introducing major alterations in order to ensure regulations were future proofed, and reduce the potential for performance disparities. Those regulations were phased in slowly, being brought in over three years.

"We decided to adopt them in 2012. The new regulations essentially meant we either get stuck in the stone age and not compete, or build our own car, so that's what we did.

"It was our first design and build project, and I will say, it was immensely difficult to actually do. Despite the trouble, we found ourselves winning in the first year. The problem was subsequent seasons, and that's when we started to realise the importance of research, development and constant re-

finement, which manufacturer teams would just do as a matter of course."

Despite the constant tweaking required each season, the car has done well for the team, contributing to a number of wins since it was introduced.

And Motorbase Performance has done well as a whole too, finishing the 2014 season as Teams' Champions in the Avon Tyres British GT Championship, and as Independent Runners-up in the Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship.

The team are hoping 2015 will be their best year yet, running campaigns in the British GT, British Touring Car Championship and Blancpain European Endurance Series.

Despite the lofty ambitions, things didn't get off to a flying start in their BTCC battle, with cash a stumbling block for them at the beginning of the season.

Mr Collins says: "We weren't able to take part in the first-half of the season's racing, as our major sponsor, who had been excellent to us for years, felt that it was time to move on. Although we tried hard to get spon-

sorship, we had to miss the first half of the season."

Depressing as that might have been for the team, they made it back on the grid last weekend, returning to BTCC for racing at Snetterton circuit in Norfolk. And they returned even stronger after using their sabbatical to develop the recently unveiled new 2 litre mountune engine.

The return saw the team claim points finishes in every round of racing.

Mr Collins said: "It's been an interesting return to the paddock. I think the team has done a great job considering we've been away for the start of the season. There's no substitute for racing so the results are probably not what we hoped but it's a good start. We've moved forward in all three races.

"Overall we've enjoyed our return to the BTCC; compliments to the team and to mountune for great reliability in all the testing sessions and also during all three races this weekend. We can now focus our efforts on claiming some silverware at Knockhill."



Out and about with the team tackling fly-tipping in Medway

Molly Kersey hit the streets with two officers to see how fly-tipping is with dealt with in Medway...

FLY-tipping is a well documented problem throughout the county, causing upset and disruption for many people.

It can be all too common to see piles of rubbish left in the street, or pieces of furniture scattered about where they shouldn't be.

Items that are fly-tipped can vary, and include white goods like fridges, garden waste and household waste.

Medway Council has a unique way of dealing with the problem.

They have a number of officers who will go out in a tipper to investigate reports of fly-tipping, searching through the waste to try and find evidence of who left it there.

Then, they will clear the fly-tipped waste away immediately.

"We never know what we are going to find when we go out. Every report of fly-tipping in Medway is investigated," said Medway Council's environmental services manager Mark Lawson.

"Our investigators go out, search through the evidence, seizing it and making sure it is all recorded, however they go out in the tipper so that when they have done that it gets collected and cleared. Pretty much all of the fly-tipping is gone by the next working day," he said.

"In some cases that doesn't hold true – if it's hazardous waste then we need a specialist contractor, but gen-

erally speaking it's all gone."

The team are kept busy every day, with numerous reports forwarded to them through the council's website or over the phone.

And the incidents of fly-tipping can be shocking.

I take a trip with senior street enforcement officer Tony Lee and community warden Yusuf Cinar to see what they deal with on a daily basis.

Mr Lee tells me that he struggles to understand why people choose to dump rubbish.

"People in Medway get a bulk collection for free that covers three items, and then it's £19 after that – which is reasonable," he said.

We are standing next to a large pile of wood that has been dumped at the side of Common Road, near Hoo, in a rural part of Medway. There are other items dumped alongside it, including a Flymo and a mop.

The rubbish had been reported to Medway Council the day before.

But from the report they had been given, this wasn't quite what they had in mind.

"They pointed out the mower but kind of missed everything else," explained Mr Lee.

"It looks like someone has had a new garden house or shed and dumped their old one."

And it is an area of Medway that



WASTE: Tony Lee and Yusuf Cinar look for evidence in fly-tipped waste in James Street. All pictures by Ady Kerry.

has seen dumping problems before.

"This road used to be blighted by fly-tipping but it has improved in recent years," he added.

"Historically it's been quite a popular spot. It can cause havoc for drivers. This has been the first one we have had here for a really long time, but it goes in peaks and troughs. The beauty of it is – they will eventually make a mistake and get caught out."

Indeed, last year there were 69 prosecutions in Medway for fly-tipping and other waste-related offences, as well as 12 cautions and two conditional discharges.

Medway Council collected some 125 tonnes of waste during this time.

And the team keep an eye on what

is happening in the area – often finding out about places where fly-tipping has been happening before a member of the public does, with a uniformed street scene enforcement team keeping tabs on what is happening.

"Probably about 50 per cent of our fly-tipping is dealt with proactively, so we have found it before someone has complained about it," explained Mr Lawson.

"Fines are obviously a lot more common and most times are more appropriate. It's unusual to get a prison sentence."

"We do have some rural areas in our borough, but a lot of what we see is in urban areas – alleyways and places like that," he added.

Mr Lee said that the cases that were investigated in rural areas tended to be the largest ones.

"In more urban areas there is a question mark over whether it is actually fly-tipping, or if it is bag theft or someone has left something out for bulk collection," he said.

"Sometimes people will rip through the bin bags to steal any small electrical items, so we have worked with police to try and stop people doing that, but that's not fly-tipping – someone has put it out genuinely and it has been ripped and litter has drifted up all over the road."

"The largest cases tend to be out in rural areas."

Mr Lawson said: "The worst case



EVIDENCE: Tony Lee and Yusuf Cinar do their reports after collecting fly-tipped waste.

was one in Capstone, where they were basically operating an illegal tip in some private woods and I think they had something like 30 tonnes of rubbish in there that they set light to. "We never actually established they were charging people but we strongly suspect that they were charging people to bring their waste in. They got fined about £11,000."

We also stop on Saunders Street and James Street, where pieces of furniture including an armchair, an old chest of drawers and a dismantled double bed have been dumped.

Mr Lee and Mr Cinar take pictures of the waste, and wearing gloves, they search for evidence.

They soon find some pieces of paper inside one of the pieces of furniture.

"We found various letters and bills with names and addresses on. What that will lead to is further investigation from the enforcement team," said Mr Lee.

"Because of the size, we have a referral unit, it goes over to them and they will then make contact with the people on the address and do the more investigative stuff. We are very much the first stage of the investigation – we come out, search, remove and pass on."

The pair lift the furniture into the tipper and then write up their reports, putting the evidence they have found into bags.

And they both said that their partnership was very effective in dealing with the issue.

"There are three arms. You have the wardens and us who work very closely together, and us and enforcement who work very closely," explained Mr Lee.

"Yusuf has the ability to assist me with my enforcement and I have the ability to assist the enforcement team. We are very fluid. If I go out and deem this to be an educational thing I can still door knock and say 'this is your collection date', but we like it to be the guys in the purple shirts who do that so you don't get that grey area of who is the nice guys and who is the not so nice guys, because as soon as you mention the word enforcement everybody kind of clams up."

The enforcement officers can issue fixed penalty notices and begin the



HAVOC: Waste was dumped in Common Road, near Hoo.

first stage of investigations into fly-tipping – bagging up the evidence they find so that a decision can be made on whether or not a prosecution is in the public interest.

Community wardens focus more on education and engagement, informing people about why they have not disposed of their waste in the correct way and what to do next time.

They try and tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour – calling in an enforcement officer if their advice is ignored.

"When you knock on the door, most people say 'oh I didn't know', so it's three strikes and you're out," explains Mr Cinar.

"If we just come in and clear it up, without engaging with people, then nobody will ever learn," adds Mr Lee.

"It's very, very much about engagement. What we try and encourage is people taking ownership."

"I think we are the only authority who does it this way, for a model it's quite effective."

So why do people fly-tip their waste in the first place?

"A lot of it is for commercial gain," said Medway Council's environmental services manager Mark Lawson.

"Sometimes it could be a householder that's decided to take it to the tip, found that the tip is closed and left it outside or dumped it in a lane nearby."

"We talk to householders who say 'I paid someone to take that away'. So someone is taking money to clear rubbish and then going and dumping it in a lane somewhere."

He added: "People need to know that they do have a duty of care to make sure any waste they transfer over to a third party has to be accounted for. They need to make sure that a person taking it away is a licensed waste carrier and they should get, at the very least, a receipt that details who took the waste, what the waste was and how much they paid."

"In some circumstances it can be that the householder has in all good faith paid someone to take it away and dispose of it properly when we find it."

And the cost to the public purse is very high.

"The council spends approximately £3 million a year collecting litter and fly-tipping," he said.

After the tipper is full, it is driven up to the recycling centre in White-wall Road, Rochester, where the fly-tipped waste is carefully separated so that it can be recycled.

"We separate the metal and tyres into their bins and other items go into landfill. We recycle what we can," said Mr Lee.

"All in all this morning we have collected just over half a ton."



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Drinkers raise a glass to boom in beer making

The county's breweries are spearheading the renaissance in British beers, ales and stouts...

Jamie Weir

pa en ew

WITH the news that the south east is spearheading the growth in British breweries, the business of beer in Kent looks to be booming.

Since the boom started in real-ale and micro-brewed beers around six or seven years ago, more than 30 small breweries have been established across the county.

That brings the total number of brewers across the south east to a total of 192 in July this year, up from 133 just two years ago.

The brewing revival is also boosting our economy with 140,033 jobs supported by the industry across the region. That's 3.2 per cent of the workforce in the south east.

Community pubs minister Marcus Jones says research showing a growth in the number of breweries is something to be excited about.

Mr Jones said: "Today's figures show Britain is back on the map as a global 'brewing powerhouse' with three breweries opening every week.

"We gave the world the IPA and the Great British pint has been revered ever since. This brewing boom means we are not only creating some of the world's best beer that we all enjoy in our local pub and at home but also thousands of jobs and a multibillion-pound boost to the economy."

Speaking before he was due to judge the Champion Beer of Britain at the Great British Beer Festival, the minister added: "There is an increasing confidence in the beer and pubs

sector with pubs diversifying, community ownership of public houses starting to take off and a booming brewing industry.

"We are determined to build on this momentum and our strategy of lower taxes, less regulation and a growing economy is the best way to support this thriving and diverse sector."

And although Kent is leading the charge, nationally the trend has been upwards, with one brewery, Brew Dog, actually offering shares in its business to fans of its offerings.

The firm's last online equity offering was oversubscribed, closing early because of what the company described as 'unprecedented demand'.

Research firm Mintel recently published a report which estimated 23 per cent of the country's population above the legal age for drinking had consumed a micro-brewed craft beer over the past six months, with 60 per cent of beer drinkers drinking their tippie of choice weekly.

That trend looks set to continue, as drinkers stay at home rather than going to pubs, which prove more expensive.

Sophie Atherton, the Beer Academy's sommelier of the year in 2012, and a leading authority on beer, told KoS that although drinkers are enjoying more pints at home, the micro-brewery revolution goes hand-in-hand with pubs.

She said: "It is true more craft beers are being drunk at home, because they're more accessible and often really keenly priced in supermarkets. But, there is evidence which shows pubs selling good quality cask ale have survived more than pubs which are selling mass



EXPERT: Sophie Atherton, the Beer Academy's sommelier of the year in 2012 is a leading authority on beer



BREWERY: It isn't just big business taking all of the profits, with small brewers capitalising on the renewed interest in beer

produced beers more often. "Great beer has always been a big part of pubs, and where the beer is better, people will still go to their local."

Although the micro-brew revolution didn't start in pubs points out the secretary of the west Kent Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) – the campaign group for real ale, real pubs and consumer rights.

Carole Dalglish, the secretary, said: "Micro-brewing beer started as a hobby in people's garages. Beer drinkers with real passion to create something different decided they wanted to make their own. Those pioneers let friends sample it, and others decided they wanted something a little bit different to the beer the big companies were making."

"That really has led to a renaissance, with people becoming more interested in the different flavours which can be incorporated into beer, and greater numbers of micro-brewers springing up. The ones in Kent are doing extraordinarily well at the moment. All of them are selling out of stock very quickly and it's a struggle to supply the demand."

"It really does show that people aren't wedded to just one taste, and that they do want to experiment. Often the micro-breweries are selling beer which is much better value and cheaper than the bigger brewers as well, and that's helping them too."

And according to Ms Atherton, it's not just prices that punters are concerned about – they are also focussed on quality, and fewer miles from brewery to pint glass.

She said: "The interest in really good quality beer has come hand in hand with people's interest in good quality food, where it is produced and how it is made. We have seen the public choosing to cut down on food miles, and also beer miles, looking to local producers for not only their food, but also their beer."

That's led to people not only drinking more craft beers, but also becoming more interested in how the beer is made, what goes in it, and all of the different flavours.

Mrs Dalglish said: "CAMRA has been growing significantly with the boom in interest in beer drinking. We add hundreds of new members to our list, and we are also seeing a rise in the number of people who want to come to our specialised tastings where we can guide people through all of the unique flavours which are encompassed in some of these incredible beers."

According to Ms Atherton, the renaissance in brewing craft beers still has room to grow.

She said: "Micro-breweries could quite easily keep growing. We're in a golden age of beer, with people beginning to understand that it can go incredibly well with food. Try drinking wine with curry, or fish and chips. Beer compliments so many dishes perfectly, and the public are starting to realise that these days, there really is a beer for everything and most of them are not mass produced."

That's a view which is held by Mrs Dalglish too, with her telling KoS that people are taking to the beer adventure fast.

She said: "There's so much out

“ The interest in really good quality beer has come hand in hand with people's interest in good quality food, where it is produced and how it is made. ”

Sophie Atherton, Beer Academy sommelier of the year 2012

there, it has become such a voyage of discovery for people who love beer. It's incredible how many flavours and styles are out there and how each person's palate responds to them."

But it's not all bad news for the brewing giants, with an industry expert telling KoS it's more about the beer, than the brewer who makes it.

Chris Wisson, senior drinks analyst at Mintel, said: "Far from being a niche area reserved for small brewers, craft beers are actually something which larger brewers can also tap into. While it was thought that the craft movement was going to be bad news for leading brewers, the fact 40 per cent of beer drinkers would be interested in trying one from a large brewer proves craft beer does not need to be limited to smaller operators."

"Rather than focusing on size, craft should be more of an ethos which stands for high quality and artisan skill, giving the consumer a different drinking experience."

East

Although, brewers like the craft beer producer Tonbridge Brewery say part of its appeal is its small size, it has a couple of real advantages over bigger breweries.

Brewery co-owner Mark Gardner told KoS that love for good beer, and the speed of the brewery gives it an advantage.

He said: "One thing you find with craft brewers is a real passion which you just don't find with big brewers. There's a love for the beer which is created, and people put so much more into making a fantastic brew as a result of that."

"We can also be very fast to market. We had one situation where a hop merchant came to us with a new variety and we thought it was great. We were able to just say let's do it without any concern about big marketing strategies and how many pints we would be able to supply."

"We were able to take a risk, and as a result create something delicious which we have been incredibly successful with. It has been a sell out beer ever since we first brewed it."

Although Mrs Dalglish says there is scope for larger brewers, they need to make sure their craft brews don't turn into standardised beer.

She said: "The big brewers are starting to introduce micro-breweries into their businesses. That's great news as it adds yet another dimension to beer production. The thing which must not happen is for those brewers to get greedy and start mass producing those beers. If that happens then it's going to be the death of them because as we've seen, many people

don't want that mass produced style of beer."

And according to Mr Wisson, the scene is set for further expansion of micro-breweries making ever more unique and interesting styles of beer.

He said: "With many operators taking advantage of government tax breaks for smaller producers, there has been a boom in craft brewers over the past decade. Many have produced newer types of beers, often seen as premium and conducive to trading up."

"This trend has continued over the past year with more than 100 breweries opening nationally and the number of brewers at a 70-year high."

That's a situation Ms Atherton sees continuing.

She said: "One of the factors specific to Kent is all of the micro-pubs which are scattered across the county. There are quite a few now, and they are all bringing excellent quality local beer to people throughout Kent."

"They aren't tied to any major brewery which allows them to serve what customers want, and that's not only great news for the micro-brewers, but also for the people of Kent who are getting great ales."

That's a sentiment echoed by Mike Benner, from the Society of Independent Brewers who says the sheer variety is good for drinkers.

He said: "This is an incredibly exciting time for British craft brewing. The number of breweries is soaring leading to more jobs across the UK and more choice for consumers. I'm sure there is a beer out there to suits all palates."

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INCREDIBLE: Mica Paris said that it was a 'great cast and a great show'. Photo: Johan Persson.

Mica Paris sings Elvis songs she grew up with on stage

Mica Paris spoke to **Molly Kersey** about her starring role in a new musical...

SOUL singer Mica Paris will be performing the hits of The King as she stars in *Love Me Tender* - a musical featuring a number of well-loved Elvis Presley songs.

The show will be making its way to Bromley later this month.

Ms Paris shot to fame on the musical scene when she was 18, releasing her platinum-selling album *So Good* in 1988.

And she said that she was hugely enjoying being a part of the show - which she says is set to surprise audiences.

"The show is so not what you think it is," she told KoS.

"The minute you hear Elvis you immediately assume that it's an Elvis tribute show, but it's not like that at all.

"It's two and a half hours of joking, laughing and music. It's a

really feel-good show."

Love Me Tender is set in the 1950s, in a small American town.

It tells the story of a guitar-playing stranger who turns up on his motorbike, leaving the townsfolk all shook up.

"It's quite a dreary town and this guy turns up and he injects this life into it," Ms Paris added.

"Everyone starts falling in love with each other!"

And Ms Paris said there were a huge number of similarities between herself and the character she will be playing.

"My character is called Sylvia and it was very easy for me to play her, because she reminds me of me, just with an American accent!" she said.

"She owns a bar and everyone comes in and shares their cares."

Ms Paris will be starring alongside actors including Sian

Reeves - known for her roles in *Cutting It* and *Emmerdale* - Ben Lewis and former *Eastenders* star Shaun Williamson, who will be playing her love interest Jim.

"It's a great cast, and a great story," she said.

And she has been enjoying singing Elvis songs on stage - with hits such as *Hound Dog*, *Heartbreak Hotel* and *Blue Suede Shoes* included in the show.

She grew up with his music, as her mother was a huge fan.

"For me, my upbringing was Elvis," she said.

"It doesn't feel like a departure, it feels like something I have always done. It's just a more gospel version of how he would sing it."

The play also addresses issues such as segregation and interracial relationships.

"All of that is tackled in a way

that is so light-hearted, you are laughing and taking it in at the same time," said Ms Paris.

"It's tackling all of these things but not in a way that is too intense. It's a very interesting, fun show, but underlying that you think about those people and how things have changed."

She said a range of people had been coming along to enjoy the performance.

"There are really young people and kids all the way up to pensioners. To see that spectrum of age groups is incredible," she said.

"It takes you back to young love and the unrequited love that we have all experienced."

Love Me Tender will be at the Churchill Theatre from August 31 to September 5.

To book visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.

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FIRST CHOICES SECURED AT ASHFORD SCHOOL

With the vast majority of students achieving their first choice university, A Level results day threw up no surprises at Ashford School.

The results are as good as they expected and there are some notable successes among them.

Jaz Stoddart is off to Cambridge to study Natural Sciences having achieved A*, A*, A and A in Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Maths respectively.

There have been many sets of A*, A and A including Nick Smelt who is going to St Andrews to study French and Spanish - he's hoping for a job in the foreign office; Teddy Learmont who is off to study Aerospace Engineering at Southampton; Rebecca Gardner who is looking forward to studying architecture at Bath, having also achieved 100% in her Art A Level; and Daisy Carter who will be studying History at Bristol.

Deputy Head and Director of Teaching and Learning, Mrs Christine Allum, said: "Our A Level students should be congratulated on their achievements and we wish them every success with future studies. The results were every bit as good as we expected and, at this point, it is looking as if the vast majority of students have secured their first choice university so we are absolutely delighted."

PARALYMPIAN HOPEFUL SECURES HIS UNIVERSITY PLACE

He dreams of representing Team GB at a future Paralympics but for now Nick Smelt is celebrating his A Level results.

The 18-year-old who, just a year ago, played for Team GB at the wheelchair tennis World Team Cup, was runner-up in the Men's 2nd Draw at the British Open in 2014 and is Kent Open Champion 2014, has secured his place at St Andrew's University to study French and Spanish with A*, A and A.

Ultimately, he wants to work in the Foreign Office or European Union in a role using his language skills. Nick, who has Cerebral Palsy, is a high achiever with an inspirational attitude to life. He says: "I will always give something a go. I've never wanted to be left out of anything going

on throughout my life, and I firmly believe that we should all grasp every opportunity offered to us to get the most out of life."

Nick is a pupil at Ashford School in Kent, a leading independent, co-educational school that has previously held the title Independent School of the Year and whose staff have picked up numerous awards this year. He studied French, Spanish and Geography at A Level.

For the last year he has held the positions of Deputy School Captain and President of the Debating Society and has also looked after the younger pupils in his role as Peer Mentor. "These roles have given me the opportunity to develop my leadership skills and to take responsibility for certain things, such as organising the Leavers'

Year Book," he said. "It has also helped me to develop the skills needed to collaborate with all sorts of people to achieve a goal."

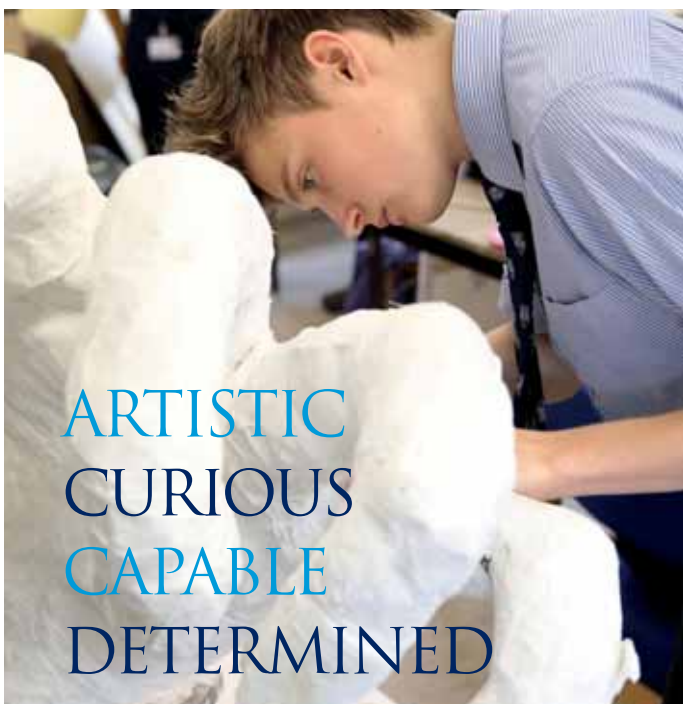
Another of Nick's passions is debating and he has represented the school at prestigious competitions such as the Oxford Union Debate. He loves having the opportunity to challenge ideas to appreciate other people's perspectives. He organised a hugely successful Question Time style debate at Ashford School this year before the election which features guests such as Lord Carey and Damian Green MP.

In his spare time - when he gets it - he supports Charlton Athletic and goes to the gym.



Above: A Level student Nick Smelt celebrates success

We wish all of our students the very best for the future, and thank all the staff who helped them to achieve these results.



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ASHFORD SCHOOL
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Festival hopes to fill the street with poems and storytelling

by **Molly Kersey**
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

LITERARY festival A Few Wise Words is aiming to fill the streets of Canterbury with events for people of all ages to enjoy.

The festival takes place across the weekend of Friday, September 4 to Sunday, September 6.

It will feature workshops, performances, storytelling on the punts and street performances, as well as music, walks, food and drink.

Multi-award-winning poet Simon Armitage will be headlining the festival this year.

Mr Armitage has a string of accolades to his name, including the Forward Prize, the Keats-Shelley Prize and a CBE - making him one of the most recognised poets in the UK.

Festival patron Jane Gardam will be inviting audiences to join her for morning coffee while she reads from her latest book of short stories.

And Middle East correspondent for the Independent Patrick Cock-

burn will be giving a talk about his latest experience of reporting from Syria.

The Arts Council England will be supporting the festival and a year-round programme featuring monthly poetry slams, poetry-for-wellbeing workshops and writing retreats with a grant of more than £60,000.

The festival has also secured support from the Canterbury Connected Business Improvement District, which works to attract investment into the city centre, and train firm Southeastern.

Passenger services director Barbara Thomas said: "We are really proud and excited to be sponsoring the brilliant Canterbury Wise Words Festival again this year."

"There are some fantastic workshops and events and we would encourage as many people as possible to come and take part."

To find out more and to book tickets visit www.wisewordsfestival.co.uk. Tickets for most events and workshops are £5.

SUCCESS: Simon Armitage, right, will be headlining the festival. Picture: Paul Wolfgang Webster



Slaves to perform in Kent

DUO Slaves will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on December 18.
Tickets are on sale now.
To book tickets visit gigst.rs/slvs.



Vegan festival takes place

A VEGAN festival will be taking place in Canterbury in October.
The festival will be held at St Peter's Methodist Church, St Peter's Street, from 11am to 4pm on October 24.
For more details go to their event page on Facebook.

Michael Jackson relived

THE hits of Michael Jackson will be performed on stage in Jackson Live at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on October 28 at 7.30pm.
For more information visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.



Tale as old as time is back

TRADITIONAL pantomime Beauty and the Beast will be performed at the Central Theatre, Chatham, from December 10 until January 3.
It will star Sue Holderness, known for her role as Marlene in Only Fools and Horses.
For more information or to book visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.

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Kent performers needed

ENTRIES are open for the Jack Petchey Glee Club challenge.

The deadline for entries is September 25 and entrants must be between 11 and 25.

Visit www.gleeclubchallenge.co.uk to apply.



Dolls' houses on display

RAINHAM and District Dolls' House and Miniaturist Group will be holding a free exhibition at St Margaret's Junior School, Orchard Street, Rainham, from August 29 to 30. It will last from 10am to 4pm on Saturday and 10am to 3pm on Sunday.

For details call 01634 312038.

The hits of Johnny Cash

THE Johnny Cash Roadshow will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on August 29.

The show features Clive John as Johnny Cash.

For more information or to book, call 01322 220000 or visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.



Elio Pace plays Billy Joel

SINGER, songwriter and piano player Elio Pace will be performing The Billy Joel Songbook with his six-piece band at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on October 11.

For more information or to book tickets visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.

Family show based on book by creative force behind Gruffalo

by Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

FAMILY show Room on the Broom will be flying into Dartford straight from a successful West End season.

The show has been adapted for the stage by the award-winning Tall Stories theatre company - a registered charity that tours the UK and the world offering imaginative performances for audiences of all ages to enjoy.

The show is based on the illustrated children's book from duo Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler - the creative force whose numerous credits include The Gruffalo, The Gruffalo's Child, Emily Brown And The Thing, The Snail And The Whale, The Snow Dragon and My Brother The Robot.

The Olivier-award-nominated musical adventure tells the story of a friendly witch, her cat and three loveable animals who take to the skies on a broom and face a fearsome dragon.

The cast of characters will include Amy Harris as the Witch, Alexandra Harman as the Cat, David Garrud as the Dog and the



FUN: The show features puppetry and songs. Picture: Helen Warner

Frog and Luke McConnell as the Bird and the dastardly Dragon.

The show features puppetry, original sing-a-long tunes and some scary fun, and it aims to be the perfect treat for families to enjoy together.

The Room on the Broom will be directed by Olivia Jacobs, who has previously directed stage adapta-

tions Emily Brown And The Thing and The Gruffalo for Tall Stories.

She will be working with creative producer Toby Mitchell, designer Morgan Large and puppet designer Yvonne Stone.

The music from the show has been composed by Jon Fiber and Andy Shaw of Shock Productions, and the lighting design will be

done by James Whiteside.

Room on the Broom will be performed at the Orchard Theatre in Dartford from Friday, August 21 to Sunday, August 23. Performances will be at 10.30am and 1.30pm, and tickets start from £12.

For more information or to book, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or call 01322 220000.

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Muscles and manatees in Miami

TRAVEL REVIEW: Miami

by Roger Crow

BOOM! Boom! Boom!
"Hold on!" yells Captain Matt, the engine of his boat roaring like an unleashed animal.

My heart's racing as we bounce from wave to wave, the familiar Floridian skyline a backdrop to my sun-kissed adventure.

I knew I should have worn a suit jacket, sleeves rolled up like some Eighties TV detective.

It's too hot for that, but crashing through the surf near Gloria Estefan's house on the aptly named celeb-filled Star Island, it's hard for any former 1980s teen not to imagine themselves as a Miami Vice crime-buster.

While Jan Hammer's title theme plays on my mental jukebox, Ocean Force Adventures' skipper guides our RIB over the next wave.

I soon discover the truth behind Miami Beach, instead of the Hollywood fantasy fed to me. It's a story more fascinating than 100 script-writers could imagine - one for each of its glorious years.

2015 marks the centenary of Miami Beach, and with a number of special events taking place, it's the ideal time to plan a visit.

Throw Thomas Cook's new direct flight from Manchester into the equation, and it's 'happy days' for a northerner like me!

I find no shortage of glorious attractions on my travels around town, including the 2,000 stars of Everglades Alligator Farm, and the more amiable aquatic life at Miami Seaquarium.

Some marine parks can be amateurish or corporate, but both of these have a big heart.

I never tire of watching rays, dol-



ENTHUSED: 'It's hard not to enthuse about this jewel in America's crown'.

phins and rescued manatees.

I'll admit I'm a little unlucky with the weather and there are downpours - one of which creates a superb rainbow over Miami Beach - but there's no shortage of indoor attractions to distract travellers.

I head downtown to PAMM (Perez Art Museum Miami) to absorb some of the paintings and sculptures instead of raindrops; a veggie burger at resident waterfront eatery Verde is

an added bonus.

My mental battery charges like a phone plugged into the mains.

As glorious as PAMM is, I soon lose my heart to another attraction: the jaw-dropping Wynwood Walls and arts district turns me into a kid on Christmas morning.

This neighbourhood, filled with murals, galleries, hipster breweries and cool bars, is hugely rewarding.

Given the chilled party atmos-

phere, I wonder how safe the region is.

"There are some 'sketchy' areas," explains Amanda, one of Urban Spirit Art Crawl's guides, her red cowboy boots and whip-smart attitude summing up the spirit of the region.

All global neighbourhoods have their good blocks and bad blocks, but I feel more at home here than many nightlife spots on home turf.

Leaving the edgy urban art gal-

TRAVEL FACTS

Roger Crow was a guest of Thomas Cook Airlines.

They offer flights from Manchester to Miami from £399 in economy.

For more information about the flights that are on offer you can visit www.thomascookairlines.com,

For further information on the destination, you can visit www.miamiandbeaches.com

lery, we go next door to a micro brewery and geek chic bar, J. Wakefield Brewery, decorated with Marvel and Star Wars ephemera. My inner 10 year old has never been so happy.

Miami is my favourite new cocktail of a holiday, blending the best of Florida's laidback charm with a fiery Cuban spirit.

Given the wealth of options on offer, it's hard not to enthuse about this jewel in America's crown.

If you want to cram as much into a dining odyssey as possible, then Miami Culinary Tours offers a great South Beach roving food experience.

You can have a spicy empanada starter in one part of town, sample a plantain and pork dish at Larios - Gloria Estefan's eatery - soak up that classic Art Deco architecture, and try the gelato for dessert a few blocks away, all for an affordable price of £38 per person.

For details you can visit www.miamiculinarytours.com.

If you love quirky attractions, then check out Coral Castle, a wonderfully unusual collection of limestone sculptures built over a period of 28 years by an eccentric Latvian who believed he'd been cured of tuberculosis with the help of magnetic currents. Truly bizarre.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



THE DIARY OF A TEENAGE GIRL

(18, 102 mins) Drama/Comedy/Romance

NO ONE emerges from the emotional minefield of adolescence without a few bruises and scars. Adapted from Phoebe Gloeckner's 2002 graphic novel, The Diary Of A

Teenage Girl documents a 15-year-old's sprint through this minefield without casting judgement on the morally flawed characters. First-time writer-director Marielle Heller is aided by an excellent cast led by British rising star Bel Powley. "I had sex today," gushes 15-year-old Minnie Goetze, recording the first chapter of an audio diary onto cassettes, which she hides in a shoebox under her bed. As Minnie details events leading up to the loss of her virginity, we realise with a shudder that her first sexual partner is her mother's 35-year-old boyfriend, Monroe. When Minnie's mother discovers the illegal relationship, Heller navigates the fallout with considerable flair and sensitivity.

MARSHLAND

(15, 104 mins) Thriller

ALBERTO Rodriguez directs and

co-writes this Spanish thriller set during the social and political upheaval of the post-Franco era. Old-school police detective Juan Robles, who believes violence is a necessary evil to secure confessions, and idealistic partner Pedro Suarez, leave behind Madrid for a remote, close-knit community to investigate the disappearance of teenage sisters Estrella and Carmen.

The girls' parents seem unwilling to help, even after the girls' mutilated bodies are discovered on marshland close to the Guadalquivir River. The cops pursue the case and the finger of suspicion points to a handsome local lad called Quini. However, the truth about the girls' demise is far more complex and disturbing, and begs uncomfortable questions about past misdeeds for the two detectives at the centre of the case.



DEATH OF A GENTLEMAN

(12A, 99 mins) Documentary

SPORTS fans and journalists Sam Collins and Jarrod Kimber, who are passionate about the traditions and history of Test cricket, join forces for a documentary that they hope will reignite interest in a sport they believe is dying. The filmmakers travel around the world with

co-director Johnny Blank, interviewing current and former players, broadcasters, journalists, administrators and ardent fans to try to understand why the traditional game has fallen out of favour. In the process, the filmmakers meet cricketer Eddie Cowan as he prepares to make his Test debut for Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in front of 70,000 people.

YOU may think your shed and all your garden contents are covered while you're away on holiday - but think again, because you may not be sufficiently insured.

The average UK garden is now worth almost £2,000, according to Halifax. Expensive patio furniture, heaters, barbecues, children's play equipment and ornaments on display can provide rich pickings for thieves.

In more extreme cases, valuable plants have been dug up, laid turf lifted and even decking has been dismantled and removed.

Thefts from gardens and outbuildings peak in July and August, according to Aviva. Valuables such as patio furniture, barbecues and garden tools are on the most wanted list for opportunist thieves, a survey by Lloyds Bank Home Insurance found.

The report also discovered around a third of homeowners say they spend more money on their gardens than five years ago. But despite their willingness to spend time and money on their outdoor spaces, more than a third - 37 per cent - have no secure lock for their garden and a quarter - 24 pc - admit that none of their outdoor items are insured.

Tim Downes, senior claims manager at Lloyds Bank Insurance, said: "We know that the majority of thefts from gardens and sheds are opportunistic, so it is worrying to see so many people leaving themselves exposed by investing in gardens without adequate insurance.



PROTECTION: Take steps to insure your garden.

Protect your garden contents

"When it comes to protecting our properties, homeowners must remember that what's on the outside also counts, so taking some small easy steps could help prevent having to stump up for lost garden goods should the worst happen."

Lloyds Bank Insurance has offered a number of tips for keeping your gardens safe.

Always ensure garden sheds, gates, garages and outbuildings remain bolted with a secure lock and make sure there are no gaps in fences or bushes for thieves to slip through, they have advised.

Also, put bricks or stones in the bottom of patio tubs to make them more difficult for would-be thieves to carry off. Mark valuable items, such

as patio furniture and ornaments, with your postcode, and keep photos of your garden valuables in case anything is stolen or vandalised.

Some insurance policies may not provide cover for all your shed contents if you suffer a break-in, Which? Gardening, the Consumers' Association magazine has found.

Which? Gardening editor Ceri Tho-

mas says: "With thefts from sheds on the rise in summer months, people should check whether their home contents insurance covers outbuildings and whether they need to cover items held outside the home separately. In the meantime, our advice is to keep sheds locked at all times, fit a battery-operated alarm, and chain and padlock expensive items."

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Hush-hush line fuelled memory

I am writing to thank you for the article in a recent Kent on Sunday.

I am 84 years old and have lived all my life within a quarter of a mile of the Pluto line which passed through Cuxton on its way to the coast. I can remember as a boy it was all very hush-hush and mostly constructed at night. We never knew what it was for until later or that it was only a few inches in diameter.

What a wonderful feat of engineering. I would be interested in more history about it.

Eric Jarvis,
Cuxton

Facts behind the bike hub plan

Last week saw the announcement of the bike hub at Gravesend station and the head of the EDC saying how wonderful a new Thames crossing east of Gravesend would be. People have the right to be made aware of some key facts which are important so people have realistic expectations of the effects on their lives of these projects.

First the cycling issue. The announcement was welcome but on its own it will not increase the number of journeys travelled by bicycle, which is something everyone should encourage as it reduces air pollution, reduces traffic congestion and improves people's fitness and wellbeing. For more journeys to be done by walking and cycling, safety needs to be improved, and the best way of doing this for everyone is to separate cyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicles.

The trouble is KCC cannot grasp this fact, which is proven by their stance on the A227/ A2/ Coldharbour Road interchange and the A227 between Istead Rise and Meopham. KCC claim there are not enough cyclists and pedestrians using the A227 interchange to justify the cost of making improvements.

The reality is the reason so few pedestrians and cyclists are in the area is that they do not want to die in an accident; death is a real possibility for any cyclist or pedestrian venturing into the interchange. The new petrol station on the old Tollgate site will greatly add to the danger as very few people believe KCC's prediction that the development's impact will be minimal. It was for this reason

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Memories of the hop season and pickers

The article in Kent on Sunday on July 5 recalled my past, when on leaving school I joined the then Southern Railway Co. completing 42 years' service from 1941.

Trained at a local station, I was sent in 1943 to Goudhurst on the former line on the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst route for the fruit and hop season.

At first all was tranquil, after which, in the latter part of August, the hoppers' luggage began to arrive. It consisted of metal trunks, boxes, cases and tea chests and contained everything but the kitchen sink.

It was mostly sorted for the farms, who collected it, but some was collected on arrival.

When the hopper specials arrived it was pandemonium.

Having been in transit in trains with no toilets you can imagine the scene and smell! They alighted both sides – seeking their luggage

– swarming over the tracks.

I, a bewildered youth, sought sanctuary in the office.

Then an elderly woman made a claim, because the leg of a table was broken – after a heavy tin trunk tied between the legs had shifted. I was joined by the signalman and the elderly woman claimed it was worth 30 shillings. I explained to him that the table wasn't worth that much but the woman overheard!

I was subjected to the most abusive language – much of it indicating that I hadn't got a proper father.

Trying to apologise, hot and red-faced I made a hasty retreat.

On Sundays, the line was opened for their families to visit. Many had had more than enough (liquid refreshment) and it was time to remain in the office again!

Bert Bassett
New Romney

tence that so much money has already been spent on a new crossing when it is not the solution, especially as there are so many other options available.

Everyone needs to remember air pollution kills people, with the young and old especially vulnerable. Pollution knows no boundaries, so if a new crossing is built in Dartford or Gravesend both communities will suffer the health effects of increased pollution. The EDC should focus on things that will help the development, like backing the call for Crossrail to be extended to Gravesend.

Alex Hills
CPRE Kent, Dartford and
Gravesham branch

Response sent but it was long

Mr Hudson-Gool claims that I did not respond to his question.

Actually I did respond but the letter was not published. I suspect that this was because the same letter dealt with some of Mr Duff's comments and the result may have been considered to be too long.

Of course people do not choose same-sex attraction, but they do have the choice as to what they do with same-sex attraction when they do experience it.

John Humphrey
Sevenoaks

Fences no cure for our EU woes

The new fence at Calais and the proposal to stack lorries at Manston are nothing more than pathetic attempts by our politicians to treat the symptoms of the crisis, rather than the cause. Fences can be cut and to spread the misery further across Kent will do little to help those suffering damage to their businesses.

The root causes are the Schengen agreement about the free movement of people within the EU, plus those EU rules which prevent us from denying to anyone arriving on our shores the welfare payments we make to our own people, and there is no way that Brussels is going to give way on either issue.

The only long-term solution is to leave the EU, taking back control of our borders and of our financial affairs, and of course the politicians riding the Brussels gravy train will resist that at all costs.

Colin Bullen
Tonbridge

that the CPRE said junction improvements needed to be made before the development opened. The stretch of the A227 between Istead Rise and Meopham should have had a wide cycle path and footpath put in when the estate in Istead Rise was built.

A path would make such a big difference to people's lives in the surrounding communities, as well as walking and cycling groups. KCC tell me it is too expensive to build. It is now 55 years since my house was built in Istead Rise. Surely the money should have been found in that time! All the media

reports on a new Thames crossing talk about reducing congestion at the Dartford crossing as justification for building a new crossing. The truth is that building roads increases congestion. This is a hard, irrefutable fact. Building new roads increases the length of journeys people make, hence the increase in congestion.

What is needed is a combination of keeping the traffic moving (which is why the CPRE proposed the free-flow tolls) and a more holistic approach to transport, which the CPRE has long campaigned for. It is gross incompe-

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- 5) Have a sense of humour.
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- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Before the Harvest by **Terry Shea,** **Teynham**

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A-LEVEL RESULTS

Crucial second chance for those aiming high at Rochester Independent College

ROCHESTER Independent College is Kent's specialist sixth form and every year students join for both intensive one year A-level courses and retake programmes designed to give a second chance to those aiming high.

It is no disadvantage to have in your chemistry class a student who struggles with English, if that student has recently won a gold medal in an international Chemistry Olympiad. Jiratheep 'Boom' Pruchayathamkorn got no fewer than five A*s in maths, further maths, chemistry, physics and statistics and is off to Oxford to study chemistry. His main worry was his English. Aspiring medic Joe McManners, who joined RIC from Tonbridge School and achieved grades A* A* in biology and chemistry from scratch in one year, says of his Thai classmate: "I'm not sure I would have done anywhere near as well without Boom in the class. And while there aren't that many international students in the

halls, the Thai scholars really make it a great place to be. We help them with their English and they help the rest of us with our homework - it's a great partnership."

Many students arrive at Rochester Independent College each year having missed their UCAS offers and leave with three top grades and a first choice university place after an intensive A-level retake course. Equally important is the self-confidence gained from these successful educational makeovers. Also sharing class with Boom were Rohan Ghag and Aimee Coleman, who joined RIC from local grammar schools.

Rohan, who improved his A-levels in chemistry and biology from BD to AB and added A-level statistics as a one year course, is now off to study biomedical sciences at his first choice, Royal Holloway, while classmate Aimee retook four subjects and secured her first choice: a coveted place at the University of Bath to study maths and physics.



SUCCESS: Students including Rohan Ghag, Aimee Coleman and Jiratheep 'Boom' Pruchayathamkorn triumphed.



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A-LEVEL RESULTS

Academic excellence at Kent College this year

KENT COLLEGE is celebrating a string of successes after finding out this year's A-level results.

An Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection earlier this year recognised academic excellence at Kent College, Canterbury.

As A-level results are published, Kent College students and staff are celebrating the school's best ever year for UCAS points - the basis for university offers - with an average of more than 400 per student - the equivalent of A* A grades.

There was also a 100 per cent pass rate at A-level, and all students gained places at their universities of choice, including Oxbridge.

Particular congratulations for some high levels of academic achievement go to the following top performers at A-level:

Beth Mason, Stephen Chan, Charlotte Wilson-Holliday, Sally Chiu, Georgy Danilyants, Eason Chen, Abbas Yusuf, Elaine Chen, Katrina Fray,

Nikita Kodolov, Amy Old, Lukas Ries, Lydia Watkins, Jeffrey Wong, Nikita Nesterenko, Caroline Zhou, Kelvin Yuen and Eric Chan.

These results follow IB (International Baccalaureate) outcomes which were again excellent.

They have been described by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) as 'exceptional compared to world averages'.

A much larger cohort followed the diploma programme this year and the average points score achieved is equivalent to four grade As at A-level.

The results will enable students to gain access to top UK universities, with places and scholarships also being offered at UBC Vancouver and Amsterdam University.

Eight students also received bilingual diplomas.

Head Girl Eva Harris scored a perfect 45 points - a score which is achieved by only the top 0.25 per cent globally.

She will be going on to study Medi-

cine at Exeter College, University of Oxford.

Headmaster David Lamper said that he was thrilled with the achievements of the school's students in this year's exams.

He said: "I am delighted with the very high levels of academic achievement shown by the students who took examinations this summer.

"They worked extremely hard whilst at the same time adding an immense amount to the extra-curricular, musical, dramatic and sporting life of our community.

"They have been excellent ambassadors of Kent College and they deserve every success."

Dr Lamper added that he was also proud of the school staff who helped the students achieve their grades.

"I am also delighted for my colleagues who have worked so hard in supporting and nurturing the development of all our students," he said.

"Many congratulations to them all."



DELIGHTED: It has been the best ever year for UCAS points.

need advice about next steps to uni?

THINKING ABOUT RETAKING AS OR A LEVELS TO AIM FOR YOUR FIRST CHOICE UNIVERSITY COURSE? DISAPPOINTED WITH AS GRADES BUT DON'T WANT TO RESTART YEAR 12? WANT TO CHANGE SUBJECTS AND TAKE 1 YEAR INTENSIVE A LEVELS? APPLYING FOR COMPETITIVE COURSES SUCH AS MEDICINE, VET SCIENCE OR LAW? UNABLE TO CONTINUE WITH THE SUBJECT CHOICE YOU NEED? STARTED IB IN YEAR 12 BUT THINK YOU'RE BETTER SUITED TO A LEVEL?

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MX-5 zooms back to its roots

FIRST DRIVE: Every Mazda is now 'Skyactivated' by the Japanese marque's newest technology – the latest MX-5 is the essence of that work...

WE'VE read lots about Mazda's Skyactiv technology – tuning driver enjoyment, boosting power to weight ratio and slashing consumption and emissions.

But the climax is the all-new Mazda MX-5: corporately significant because every Mazda model is now 'Skyactivated', but also forensic proof of what that tech is all about.

It has allowed Mazda to turn the clock back 25 years to the launch of the original MX-5; the new Mk 4 is close to the scale, weight and pleasure of the Mk 1, yet carries the best tech and safety demanded by consumers and legislation while retaining the front engine/rear-driven balance.

The intervening Mk 2 and 3 models were still great cars, but weight gain and, let's be honest, a fall-off in styling now makes them seem slightly flawed against this vivacious newcomer.

More aggressive styling makes it look bigger in pictures, causing a quick mental re-calibration when viewing in the metal.

But while you feel snug in the cockpit – a visual trick enhanced by the door cappings curving inwards toward the fascia – the car is as spacious as the previous generations, all of which were comfy enough for a long distance business trip, let alone sporty expeditions or weekends away.



As ever, the properly watertight soft top, can be raised and lowered manually in seconds, and with even greater ease.

The big question for MX-5 buyers is: the 129bhp 1.5-litre petrol or 158bhp 2.0-litre petrol engine?

The former is the essence of the original, while the latter is by far the most performance-

orientated MX-5 to date – going a long way to silencing those "it's not a 'hairy-chested'" sports car jibes.

For the money (from £18,495) the 1.5 is my favourite, though the latter does feel more grown up.

Either way, the best affordable sports car you can buy just got even better.

Junior Jaguar is an all-British star

All-new XE takes the fight to BMW's all-conquering 3 Series, with looks, driving enjoyment and low costs, writes **Steve Loader...**

FORGIVE Jaguar bosses for feeling a bit smug about the new Jaguar XE compact sporting saloon.

The one-time sector champion, had much derision heaped on it last time out for producing the Ford Mondeo derived front-wheel or AWD drive X-Type, finally axed in 2010.

Its belated retort is the brilliant rear-wheel drive XE (from £26,995) – a Spitfire to battle the Messerschmitts of German rivals.

With the BMW 3 series in its sights particularly, but also the Audi A4 and Mercedes-Benz C-Class, it means the UK has a serious modern driver-pleasing player at last, one that would also meet the approval of legendary company founder Sir William Lyons.

The XE turns heads, is competitive on cabin size for its sector – the bigger XF beckons for those who need more – and has the chassis and powertrains befitting a car touted as a sporting saloon.

Above all though, it is competitive in the executive company car ‘user chooser’ sector dominated for several decades by the 3 Series.

More recently, the German has also become the nation's best-selling



family-size model overall, helped by keen business leasing rates allowed by slow depreciation due to the queue of buyers forming for every used 3 Series arriving on the secondhand market - something mainstream rivals like the Ford Mondeo cannot counter.

The icing on the cake for the

executive – already alerted to Jaguar's increasingly strong image by the svelte XF and rumbustious F-Type sports car line-up – is the XE's smooth ride and great handling, again, all part of what is expected from a brand that produced those 1960s hero cars, the Mk II saloon and later XJ.



And while the interior is contemporary, Jaguar stylists have also blended in something of the ‘Trad Jag’ quality.

The exterior is the clincher though: swooping lines, an aggressive and frowning headlamp/grille evolution of the corporate look and a short and rakish rear end.

Jaguar XE Portfolio	
2.0i4 180PS	
Price:	from £35,425
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	BMW 3 Series

I wasn't able to drive the entry level diesel expected to take a big chunk of corporate sales, but the one likely to steal my heart was the £44,865 336bhp 3.0 V6 petrol model in S trim: it growled like a Jag and 0-62mph in just 4.9 seconds showed it had the claws to match, yet the lightness of the hi-tech construction allows Jaguar to claim 34.9mpg (combined).

But the £35,425 177bhp 2.0 four-pot diesel Portfolio told me you can still have your cake and eat it with 0-62mph in a lively 7.4 seconds and 67.3mpg (combined).

The latter might not growl so much either, but the smoothness is impressive while the driving experience is hardly less exciting. With a new XF in the offing too, it's clear Jaguar really is back in the big time.



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The new Jaguar XE is here. Our most advanced, efficient and refined sports saloon ever. Born from the DNA of the F-TYPE, its sporting intent is clear. Beneath the taut, aerodynamic design XE has an aluminium-intensive architecture and cutting-edge technologies at its heart. The new XE delivers breathtaking performance and efficiency with a range of engines from a supercharged V6 to a frugal 99g/km of CO₂. And from only £26,990, the new XE is ready to rule the roads.

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Model shown is XE S in Italian Racing Red (with optional 20" propeller alloy wheels with space saver wheel, advanced parking assist pack, panoramic sunroof and lighting pack priced at £48,835).

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The MV Prinses Christina

Dutch Bulbfields & Amsterdam River Cruise

By Rail or Air - Amsterdam, Hoorn, Volendam, Amsterdam - 25 April, 2016

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£599pp** • Quote: RBD4-KOS

Join us on this exclusive Dutch Bulbfields River Cruise on board the stylish MV Prinses Christina. A visit to Holland in springtime is a mesmerising feast for the senses as the gardens and fields are full of bursting tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, complemented with spring flowering shrubs and plants. The highlight of this cruise is an included visit to Keukenhof Gardens with its magnificent floral displays and there is time to explore the canals, museums and flowers markets of Amsterdam too. We also visit Volendam, on the Zuiderzee, and Hoorn.

We travel by train from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Amsterdam or alternatively fly from Gatwick to Amsterdam. Our exclusive river cruiser, will host you in comfort and style with all meals plus selected free drinks with lunch, dinner and at the bar from 6pm to midnight.



Keukenhof Gardens

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • GN Host and Cruise Director on board
• Return rail travel St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Amsterdam OR return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • 4-nights full board cruise on the MV Prinses Christina sharing a twin bed outside cabin on Cabin Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Visit to Keukenhof Gardens • Entertainment • Transfers abroad • Fun & Friendly Cruising



Free Drinks
Private Charter

Secret Citadelle to Christmas Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Dinant, Aachen, Valkenburg & Brussels - 24 Nov, 2015

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£529pp** • Quote: TC11-1-KOS

Join us for a relaxing river cruise starting in the picturesque town of Dinant, located on the Meuse River and home to an impressive citadel. Sailing past scenic landscapes onto Namur, with its beautiful 17th and 18th-century architecture. We visit two exceptional Christmas Markets: Aachen in Germany, with a visit to the Lindt Chocolate Factory Outlet and Valkenburg in Holland, with its unique Christmas Caves. We also visit Brussels, the Belgian capital with its famous Christmas market and Grand Place.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply
• 4-night full board cruise on the MPS Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on Main Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine, & soft drinks served at lunch & dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



Free Drinks
Private Charter

Three Countries Christmas Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Maastricht, Valkenburg, Liege, Monschau & Brussels - 28 Nov, 2015

4 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£429pp** • Quote: TC11-2-KOS

Join us for a fun-packed cruise sailing between the historic city of Maastricht in Holland, and Liege in Belgium. Included excursions take in Germany's delightful Monschau, a picturesque town nestled in the hills, offering visitors a wealth of things to see and do, quaint shops, romantic old streets and a small yet beautiful Christmas market. We also visit the Dutch 'Christmas town' of Valkenburg with its unique Christmas market caves, and Brussels, the Belgian capital.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply
• 3-night full board cruise on the MPS Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on main deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



Free Drinks
Private Charter

Germany & Belgium Christmas Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Maastricht, Aachen, Bruges & Brussels - 1 Dec, 2015

4 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£429pp** • Quote: TC12-1-KOS

Join us for a fun-packed river cruise visiting three wonderful Christmas markets including Aachen in Germany which is transformed into a paradise of lights and colours with its festive market located around the cathedral and town square, and home to the Lindt chocolate factory outlet; beautiful Bruges with its wonderful festive atmosphere and historic charm, and Brussels with its festive market and majestic Grand Place.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply
• 3-night full board cruise on board the MPS Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on main deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



Free Drinks
Private Charter

New Year Party & Festive Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Maastricht, Liege, Nijmegen & Rotterdam - 29 Dec, 2015

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£699pp** • Quote: NY12-KOS

Celebrate the New Year in style on board the MS Johannes Brahms, sailing from Liege in Belgium to Holland including stops at Maastricht, home to Andre Rieu, Nijmegen, and Rotterdam where we count down to 2016 with a New Year party on board and a spectacular fireworks display over the city's Erasmus Bridge. We visit the festive markets in Liege, Maastricht and Nijmegen, explore Dordrecht and enjoy a candlelit New Year's day cruise in Rotterdam.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports to Amsterdam - supp't may apply • 4 nights full board cruise sharing a twin bed MR2 rear cabin on main deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from lunchtime to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad

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Hours: 30 per week
Salary: £12,172 p.a.
Closing date: midday Friday 21st August
Interviews: week commencing 24th August

Application form and further details can be located on the School's website:

www.doyrms.com
email: reception@doyrms.com
or call: 01304 245023
CVs will not be accepted

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post including checks with past employers and via the Disclosure and Barring Service.

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to work Monday-Friday 08.30 – 13.30

Must have experience
Post is subject to an enhanced DBS check
Cost to be met by applicant
For more information please contact
Julia or Emily on 01303 254019

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Applicants must have a current MoT licence for the test position.
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Excellent rates of pay.
Immediate start.
Email CV to jobs@totalmotorcare.co.uk or telephone 01304 620999

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Excellent rates of pay.
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Email CV to jobs@totalmotorcare.co.uk or telephone 01304 620999

The Medaille Trust was founded in 2006 by a number of religious congregations in response to the plight of thousands of people who are being trafficked into the UK each year. The Trust was established as a charity and opened its first safe house in January 2007. A major part of the Trust's work is to raise awareness of the plight of those who are enslaved and exploited in the trafficking industry, and campaign on their behalf.

The Medaille Trust is looking to recruit to the following position:



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Salary £17,410 (£8.93 per hour)
Fixed Term Contract until 31/03/2018
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As a Key Worker you will assess and work with designated clients in order to effectively co-ordinate their support to meet their needs in line with Support Plans.

You will work as a member of the team providing a safe temporary environment for vulnerable adults who have experienced trauma. You will provide high quality practical and emotional support to the residents, helping empower them to develop the practical skills and self-confidence to live safely and independently.

You must have experience of working with vulnerable adults, the ability to work within a 'risk associated' environment and ideally experience of working within a residential setting and with non-UK citizens. IT skills, administration skills and health and safety awareness are required.

This service is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and unsociable hours may be required. You will receive additional payment for on-call duties and sleep ins.

Due to the nature of the post, confidentiality and discretion are of paramount importance. This role is restricted for females under the Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 and subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check.

The post holder requires the ability to drive with a valid licence with use of own vehicle insured for business purposes.

Closing date: **Monday, 24 August 2015 at 9am** Interview date: TBC



To apply, please visit our website:
www.medaille.co.uk
or email: recruitment@medaille-trust.org.uk
Strictly **NO** Agencies.
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Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in a vacancy for the following staff:

Staff Nurse (Outpatients/Pre-Assessment) – Margate

Part time Hours: 30 per week Closing date: 21/08/2015
Salary: £19,000-20,000

Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level or Dual Trained Registered Nurse
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Experience in a surgical/medical environment with a knowledge and understanding of surgical/medical procedures

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Carolyn Flegg, Outpatients Manager on 07925 978812

Senior Staff Nurse – Margate

Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 21/08/2015
Salary: £26-28,000 per annum dependant on experience

Qualifications

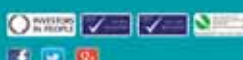
- Registered Nurse 1st Level
- Minimum 2 years' experience, preferably in a surgical environment with a broad knowledge and understanding of multi specialist surgical procedures
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Teaching and Assessing Course or equivalent

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Mary Guarnieri, Ward Manager on 07786 173797

For a job description and application form please visit www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Justine Whittle, HR Assistant
Telephone: 01304 245943
E-mail: recruitment@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospitals is an equal opportunity employer. These positions are subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.



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Be part of our successful team

Media Sales Office based Executive

Here at Archant Kent we are looking for an office based Sales Executive based in Ashford to support and increase business in our publications in print and online as we continue to grow. We are looking for an ambitious person to join our successful sales team. Ideally you will be an IT literate individual who is tasked focused with a good eye for detail. You must be able to communicate well both verbally and in writing.

With our excellent product training and our continuous development programme, we'll show you how to develop first class solutions for our customers, cultivate excellent business relationships and present effective and innovative ideas that will provide real value and response for our customers.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WILL HAVE:

- A passion for publishing
- An understanding of brand awareness and advertising solutions
- The ability to produce and action effective ideas and promotions
- Resilience and influential communication skills to overcome objections
- The ability to secure new business and manage existing accounts

In return we are offering up to £18k basic with bonus OTE potential of 5k. The exceptional benefits include five weeks annual leave, and a contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period). A wide range of voluntary benefits include a cycle scheme, childcare vouchers, contributory private health scheme and Archant Gold (charity matched funding).

If you think you have the talent we require, you are ambitious, target driven and want to be part of our growth plans then we want to hear from you immediately.

Field Sales Account Manager

Our very successful Kent Life magazine has a rare opportunity for an Account Manager to join them. Kent Life is a glossy lifestyle magazine that celebrates all that is great about life in this wonderful county. At the heart of the magazine are features on villages, towns and cities, society occasions and food & drink events, hotels and restaurants, as well as theatre, drama, ballet, music, festivals and family entertainment.

This opportunity will see you selling print and digital advertising campaigns and solutions to local businesses. As well as managing existing customers and seeing that they continuously gain return on their investment, you will also work with new clients, inspiring them with genuine cost-effective ideas and solutions tailor-made for their business.

With our excellent product training and our continuous development programme, we'll show you how to develop first class solutions for our customers, cultivate excellent business relationships and present effective and innovative ideas that will provide real value and response for our customers.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WILL HAVE:

- A passion for publishing and lifestyle magazines
- An understanding of brand awareness and advertising solutions
- The ability to produce and action effective ideas and promotions
- Proven face-to-face B2B sales experience
- Resilience and influential communication skills to overcome objections
- The ability to secure new business and manage existing accounts
- * The self-motivation and organisation to work from home
- A full valid driving licence

In return we are offering up to £23k basic with bonus OTE potential of £5k per annum as well as a company car, laptop and phone.

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice of application for Grant of a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that La Cosa Nostra Cafe Limited has applied to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on 6th August 2015 for the grant of a premises licence under Section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003 for use at the premises to be known as La Cosa Nostra Café, 77 St. Johns Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9TT. The proposed licensable activities and their hours are:

Retail Sale of Alcohol: Monday to Sunday 10.00-19.00

The record of this application is held by the Licensing Authority and can be viewed on the website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk or inspected at the offices of the Licensing Partnership, P.O. Box 182, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1GP during normal office hours

Any Person wishing to submit representations to the application must do so in writing to the Licensing Authority at the address above, giving in detail the grounds for the objection. Representations must relate to one or more of the Licensing Objectives: Prevention of Crime & Disorder; Prevention of Public Nuisance; Protection of Children from Harm; or Public Safety. Representations must be received by the Licensing Authority no later than **3rd September 2015**.

The Licensing Authority will have regard to any representations made when considering this application. It is an offence under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 for anyone to recklessly or knowingly make a false statement in connection with a licensing application. **The maximum fine on summary conviction is £5000.**

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116

STOPPING UP OF LAND AT NORTH ROAD, SHORNCIFFE CAMP, FOLKESTONE

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT The Kent County Council as Highway Authority for the County of Kent propose to make an application to the Magistrates' sitting at Canterbury Magistrates' Court on 29th September 2015 at 10am for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at North Road, Shorncliffe Camp, Folkestone as coloured pink on the plan on deposit.

A copy of the draft order and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of The Kent County Council at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

Any person to whom this Notice has been given or who uses the highway specified or who would be aggrieved by the making of the Order may appear before the Magistrates' Court to raise an objection or make a representation on the application. Any person intending to appear before the Magistrates' Court at the hearing of the application is requested to inform Charlotte Morgan GCILEx by post to Legal Services, The Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ, by email charlotte.morgan2@kent.gov.uk, or by telephone 03000 416689 before quoting reference number LS/21/106056/419.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Charlotte Morgan GCILEx using the contact details shown above.

JOHN BURR

DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Schemes & Member Highway Fund
Ashford Highway Depot
Henwood Industrial Estate
Javelin Way
Ashford
Kent
TN24 8AD



THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (RATHMORE ROAD LINK CLASSIFIED ROAD) (SIDE ROADS) ORDER 2015

THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

The Kent County Council hereby give notice that they have made, and are about to submit to the Secretary of State for Transport for confirmation, an Order under Section 14 and Section 125 of the Highways Act 1980

Authorising the Council to:—

- improve highways (including raising, lowering or otherwise altering);
- stop up highways;
- construct new highways;
- stop up private means of access to premises;
- provide new means of access to said premises;

on existing highways and construct new highways with respect to roads that cross or join the new Link Road which is to be constructed between Wrotham Road, 38 metres north of the junction with Cobham Street, and Darney Road, 55 metres north of the junction with Pelham Road.

Copies of the Order and of the relevant plan(s) may be inspected free of charge at all reasonable hours from 17th August 2015 at:

- the offices of the Gravesham Borough Council, Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1AU
- the offices of Kent County Council, Main Reception, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ
- The documents can also be viewed on the County Council's website: visit www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/roads/road-projects/rathmore-road-improvement-scheme

ANY PERSON may not later than 30th September 2015 object to the confirmation of the Order by notice to the Secretary of State for Transport, National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7AR stating their name and the grounds of their objection.

Roger Wilkins
Interim Director of Highways, Transportation & Waste
Kent County Council
Invicta House
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XX



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Gills book place in second round

Gillingham off to a great start in Capital One Cup campaign

Football

By Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

GILLINGHAM got off to a great start in its Capital One Cup challenge, taking a 2-1 win over Plymouth Argyle.

The team came from being a goal down, after a motivated Plymouth managed to draw first blood at their Home Stadium.

It was striker Craig Tanner that snapped up the chance, smashing home a well timed volley.

The Gills though, were unlucky not to have grabbed the first goal, after Bradley Dack had an earlier goal ruled out for offside. Gills boss Edinburgh wasn't happy about the ruling.

He said: "There is not an awful lot you can do with a finish like that.

"We probably could have done better to stop the cross coming in but one of our players lost his footing at a crucial time and it was an outstanding individual goal, a great strike.

"I've learnt a rule tonight [on Dack's disallowed goal], if it's an accidental ricochet then it's offside. I'm bemused by it, I was flabbergasted why it hadn't stood."

One thing Edinburgh was delighted with, was that the squad had shown resilience, and not crumbled after falling behind.

Edinburgh said: "We were pushed all the way and are obviously delighted to come out victorious, come from behind and collect another victory which puts us through to the next round - I'm very happy.

"We knew if we were to leave here [as winners] we had to be at our best. "We certainly competed very well,



GOAL: Hessenthaler celebrates his winning goal

Pictures: ADY KERRY

perhaps not as fluent with the ball in the first half but we were much better second half."

The team took the win after Dack finally managed to score a legitimate goal, with Jake Hessenthaler providing the other one.

Edinburgh praised Dack for the finish.

He said: "It was a great finish and that's what he's got, great composure and pops up in those little areas.

"The second one was a great touch from Rory Donnelly across for Jake Hessenthaler to nod in for the win."

Hessenthaler said: "A great knock back by Rory and it was nice to get on the score sheet."

Margate's Terry Brown has faith in the team

TERRY Brown isn't happy with the way Margate FC has started its campaign in the Vanarama National South league, but says the team are on the rise.

The boss of the Blues, who have just started their Vanarama National South league campaign after last season's promotion, said that his team had failed to deliver the results he wanted to see.

The squad could only manage draws in their first two games of the season - both tough challenges against Truro and Whitehawk.

While the gaffer wasn't disappointed with the Truro result, he said that the game against Whitehawk had highlighted areas where the team was failing.

He said: "Our tally from the two games is two points out of a possible



BLUES: Brown's boys need to do more according to the boss

six, which just isn't good enough.

"We saw cohesion, and saw things we can do better, that's just defend-

ing, as the goals we gave away today were just awful frankly.

"We should have won that game."

Despite the disappointment against Whitehawk, Brown wasn't too disappointed with the result against Truro.

He said: "I didn't feel Truro was two points dropped, as there were a few times when they could have won that game. However, against Whitehawk we simply didn't perform."

Although Brown wasn't as happy as he might have been, he said that the team, which had seven new players when playing Whitehawk, would get better.

"What I want the players and fans to take home is that we're an evolving side. We will get better.

"We've got a very good squad, who are right up there with the big boys."

Sport Shorts » Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Jamie Weir on 01233 653481

Pembury footgolfer Dan wins first regional title

KENT footgolfer Dan Spice has won his first major competition, finding victory in a regional British Championship.

The Pembury player claimed the 2015 South West Open title after a nail-biting playoff hole.

Until mid-afternoon, it had been reigning UK number one player Ben Clarke sitting at the top of the leaderboard.

However, some textbook play from Spice on the 10th and 11th holes put him back in contention for the win.

Spice kept his nerve down the back nine, to take a solid 59 and tie with Clarke for the lead.

That meant a playoff hole between the top two players.

Spice managed to sink a birdie, consigning Clarke to the runner-up spot, and winning his first major.

For those unfamiliar with the sport of footgolf, the objective is to complete a round in as few kicks as possible, using golf style scoring.



WINNER: Spice brought the cup back to Kent



DERBY: Maidstone's Gallagher Stadium saw Fleet take a 2-0 win

Fleet beat Stones 2-0 to take Kent derby win

THE eagerly awaited Kent derby between Ebbsfleet United and newly promoted Maidstone United didn't disappoint fans.

Ebbsfleet managed to snatch a 2-0 victory from the Stones on Tuesday evening, giving the Fleet the derby bragging rights.

The game - held at Maidstone's Gallagher Stadium - saw a capacity crowd roaring on the teams.

Apart from an early scare for the Fleet when Fannie Collins whizzed a cross along the six-yard box, the north Kent team set out their stall in a

confident manner, settling into a comfortable pace which saw them keep possession.

Fleet managed their first goal just minutes before the half time whistle.

A cross from Danny Kedwell found the head of Matt Godden, and although the Stones keeper stopped that attempt, the rebound was caught by Jordan Parkes who slammed home from point blank range.

New signing Parkes took the second goal too, after a John Paul Kissock pass found him in the box, and with space to convert.

Lordswood travel to Dartford

LORDSWOOD FC are on the road in their match against Greenwich Borough in the FA Cup Extra Preliminary Round today (Sunday).

The squad are coming off the back of a win, after they beat Deal Town 1-0 in the Southern Counties East League on Tuesday evening.

Manager James Collins said he was happy with the performance,

despite a tough final 20 minutes.

The squad got the winning goal 38 minutes in, when George Smith got lucky with a deflection which beat Deal's keeper. It capped a good start to the season, according to the manager.

Despite the tie against Greenwich looking tough, Collins says he's looking forward to the game.

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